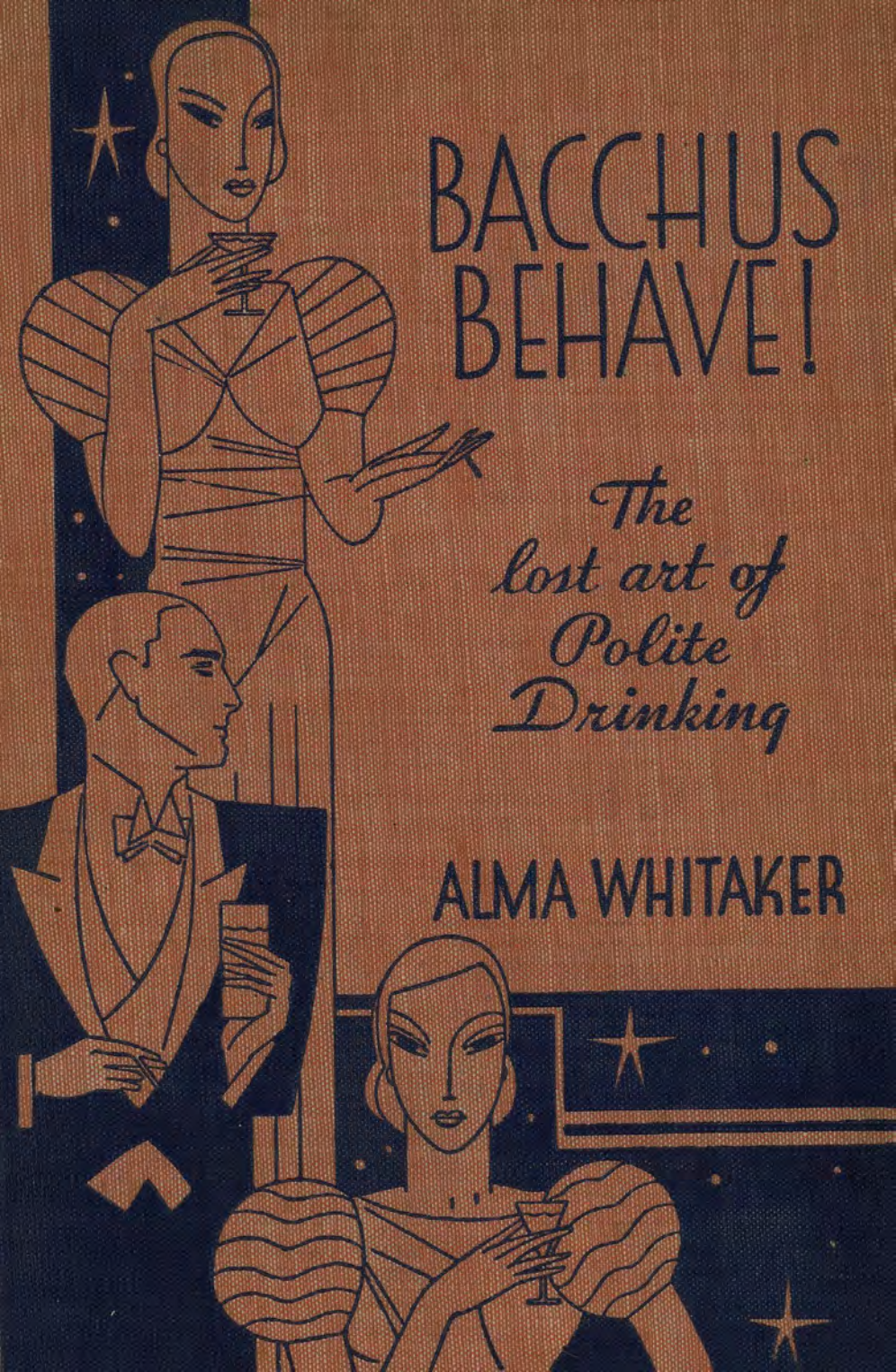
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By ALMA WHITAKER

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THE LOST ART OF POLITE DRINKING!

CHAPTER I

IN WHICH WE DISCUSS NECTAR AND MANNERS

WE must positively do something about it. Here we are, rushed into a post-Prohibition era, all unprepared. Having been involved for so long with synthetic gin, flapper whisky, and a varied assortment of friendship-testing home-brews, our palates and our manners can scarcely be expected to cope successfully with the niceties of the superior nectars that await our fancy.

Perhaps we deserved what happened to us. We never were what one might call really versed in the more delicate points of refined drinking. There was no Emily Post to guide us.

Even in those halcyon pre-Prohibition days, when we went in for the "champagne standard," and enjoyed certain national distinctions all our

own for the invention of the cocktail, our manner of service and consumption left much to be desired. The more gentlemanly nations felt we rather overdid things. . . .

A really gentlemanly nation would never bring upon itself such a confounding retribution as an Eighteenth Amendment. (I decline to commit myself by naming the gentlemanly nations!)

Still, we have our ideals. Properly fortified with instructive information, we may yet learn to carry our liquor like gentlemen. It's deucedly messy when we don't. Gives the world an impression that our upbringing was sadly inadequate. We offer such a handle to the reformers, who should never receive that form of encouragement.

It is enormously important that the Repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment should be a success. This can best be achieved if the women of the nation, and specifically the hostesses, take the matter in hand. If we are as fussy and fastidious about the quality, quantity and service of our liquor and about the conduct of our guests as

we are about the food, the table service and the accouterments of our parties, all will be well.

It has been said that every nation gets the women it deserves. Women set the standard of social conduct everywhere. The male of the species will always behave just as well or as ill as the women of his acquaintance demand.

The women of the United States are credited with being the most influential with their men of any country. *Voilà,* sisters, for pity's sake let us set a standard that is at least equal to that of the more civilized nations in this delicate matter of the cup that cheers but positively should not inebriate. It is up to us.

Through the recent painful era there has been a marked disposition to "humor" the drunk. Conditions contributed to this. Hosts felt smart and lavish to be able to provide any sort of forbidden nectar at all. It was usually vile. None of the sacred ritual of serving the right beverages with the right courses at the right time was observed, for obvious reasons. Appalling mixtures were imbibed. So that when a guest sort of swilled it down with relish and reckless in-

discretion, while he might prove an infernal nuisance, it was something of a joke. The critical faculties of the rest of the party were likely to be somewhat dulled. The tendency was to be patient with the chap, and try to overlook the more objectionable results.

All the same, in polite circles, the drunk cannot be tolerated. He is thoroughly reprehensible from every standpoint. (And, alas, *she* is even worse!) He not only spoils the party for every one else, but, confound the fellow, he doesn't even enjoy it himself.

Wines and spirits should be strictly a social lubricant. The right quantity imbibed under the right conditions affords a pleasant stimulation. Taken judiciously, they are a tonic to our sluggish brains, exert a mellowing influence on our dispositions, quicken our sympathetic perceptions, soften our more hypercritical faculties, and generally bring the nicer qualities of our characters to the fore.

But there is a delicate point beyond which they expose all the less desirable qualities of our natures. So few people can afford to get drunk.

For then they stand revealed with all their nastier inhibitions, and any virtues they may possess vanish under the test.

For this reason, of course, perhaps no woman should risk marrying a man until she has seen him unpleasantly drunk. (And *vice versa!*) One certainly knows the worst about a person under those conditions. The last veil of mystery is torn aside. If one can still respect a person one has seen thoroughly drunk, he must be a veritable archangel. Safer not to risk it—the odds are against us all.

The trouble with us Americans is that we are so expansive. We hate to seem stingy. We are so apt to proceed upon the idea that if a little is good a lot must be much better. This is a serious fallacy—whether it is liquor, castor oil, mustard, kisses or jewelry.

The older, more experienced countries know all about the precious creed of moderation. For the epicure there is a sacred ritual of drinking, to flout which is to sear his very soul. Vastly more important than not eating with one's knife,

or drinking with a spoon in one's cup, or surreptitiously wiping one's nose on one's napkin.

This ritual has been worked out through the ages, based upon the assumption that wine is a gift of the gods to add charm and happiness to life. Just as all "etiquette is to do and say the kindest thing in the nicest way," so the ritual which has evolved for the drinking of liquor is to achieve the ultimate of pleasant social content. To flout this ritual to the point where it encompasses nothing but deterioration is sheer sacrilege. At best, it's rotten bad form.

One of the first lessons the host must learn is responsibility for the proper conduct of this precious ritual—designed solely for the greater happiness of all concerned.

We have long since learned that it is bad form to serve plates overloaded with any one type of food. We wouldn't dream of serving a quart of soup, or piling a plate up with a weird conglomeration of viands. We know all about the piquancy of small dainty portions in this connection. Yet hosts still are apt to fall into the

grievous error of mistaking a lavish service of ill-selected liquors for generous hospitality.

It is vitally important that we should learn to become fastidious in the matter of liquor. The hostesses of the United States must see to it that vulgar excess becomes taboo. It must be as great an offense for a guest to become intoxicated at your house and expose the nakedness of his character as it would be for him to disrobe and expose the nakedness of his person.

Man will be the last thing civilized by Woman.

CHAPTER II

SIMPLE RULES FOR RIGHTEOUS BEHAVIOR

FOR the benefit of the imbiber, we will now set forth a simple Ten Commandments, which, if adhered to, will ensure the utmost propriety combined with the fullest sense of well-being.

1. Never get drunk.
2. Above all, never get drunk at some one else's expense.
3. As a host, remain responsibly sober at all times.
4. Never drink alone.
5. Inform yourself conscientiously of your own capacity, and then divide by two.
6. Never drink when you are unhappy. Alcoholic beverages should be reserved strictly for pleasant social occasions.
7. Never drink in disreputable company.
8. As a guest, always remember that discretion is the better part of valor.
9. If the waiter fails to refill your glass, accept his superior judgment on your behalf.

10. When in doubt of your condition, stand not upon the order of your going, but go at once.

There are certain points which the reckless imbiber should always bear in mind.

He simply cannot afford to get drunk. He will inevitably expose himself in all his most unpleasant weaknesses. He will become an intolerable pest, no matter what form it takes with him. He is equally objectionable as the type that gets muggy and dull, and ultimately passes out; or as the type that becomes hilariously exuberant and disgustingly noisy; as the type that gets too darned pally and affectionate and wants to paw the ladies; as the type that waxes belligerent and wants to fight all and sundry; as the type that gets tearful and weeps in self-pity; or as the type that grows haughty and austere. He is thoroughly messy, invariably smells to high heaven, and is generally an intolerable bore.

And don't forget that, while your best friends may forgive, they will never forget.

Moreover, when society becomes organized on the new basis, apologies next day will be in order

more than ever. Apologies are painful for all concerned. They are invariably accepted with reservations. The best you can hope for is being considered a messy ignoramus, lacking in all the decencies of common resistance. The best people will avoid inviting you again. The drunk is always a liability, never an asset, no matter how many extenuating virtues he may credit himself with.

There is apparently no subject upon which the average American is so distressingly misinformed as upon his own capacity for strong liquor. For which reason it is just as well not to risk trusting one's own judgment. Better to believe the wife, or accept the gentle hint when the butler or waiter discreetly passes you over on the next round.

If the wife nudges you and slowly shakes her head from left to right, it is safer to do her bidding. If she tells you afterward that you became glassy-eyed, wabbled dangerously and tipped over the standard lamp; laughed uproariously; talked too much and too loudly; pawed your hostess abominably; pressed a wet and re-

sented kiss upon the lady guest of honor; ruined the banker's best joke; offered to fight the visiting celebrity, and generally made yourself an infernal nuisance, it is just as well not to dismiss her accusations too lightly. She is probably right.

Another point to be kept in mind is that the American stomach is so very apt to lack self-control when plied too generously with liquor. It may rebel at any moment, with the most disastrous and unromantic of results. No guest whose stomach has sent his dinner back all over the best oriental rug will ever enjoy any really satisfactory social prestige. I mean, this is the sort of thing hostesses pass along to one another in the boudoirs—as they shudder with revulsion. He might as well be an untouchable after that sort of debacle. He will, and rightly so, be an outcast from all but the most inferior social circles.

We will pass over the painful subject of women who imbibe too freely. It is too utterly distressing. Fortunately, even under Prohibition, they had no social standing whatever.

Once in a way a man can live that sort of thing down, but a woman never. The ghost of her messy past will be forever rising up to haunt her —even if she joins the W.C.T.U. Even men, who are by no means fastidious on their own account, will relate with hypocritical shockfulness how they once saw a certain female "tight" and oh, boy!

Fortunately women are vainer than men, in the aggregate. Vanity can often be more compelling than moral righteousness. And precious few women are so dumb as to imagine that they look or act their best while under the influence. Their imagination can conjure up the picture pretty faithfully—smeared make-up, disheveled hair, bleary eyes, that ghastly stale liquor smell, disordered clothing, swaying idiocy, raucous laughter, and, dear heaven, what don't they reveal about themselves?

The nicer type of men, with instinctive gallantry, no matter how lacking in the finer considerations on their own account, can usually be trusted to aid a woman in avoiding such excess.

If he letteth thee recklessly swill,
And laugheth to see thee asway,
He loveth thee not, pretty Jill,
Nor cares at thy later dismay.
But,
If he demurreth at "just one more glass,"
And guardeth thy poise with concern,
He treasureth thee, pretty lass,
If thou hast but the wit to discern.

Because the word "drunk" is so offensive, there have been efforts to supplant it, even in the most low-brow circles.

But whether one alludes to the condition as "tight," "stewed," "lit," "soused," "squiffy," "intoxicated," "inebriated," or the more genteel "solography"—or dodges the issue with "a bit beyond himself," "three sheets in the wind," "in his cups," "half-seas over," or endeavors to gloss it with classic reference to "a devotee of Bacchus," the implication is always the same, the condition equally regrettable.

When any such reference is in order, the gentleman has had too much.

One drunk may be slightly less offensive than another drunk, but there are no nice drunks.

Even Noah, chosen of Jehovah, left a tragic blot on his escutcheon, after he planted that vineyard (Gen. 9:20).

Those Repealers who like to insist that the Good Book endorses liquor and adore quoting Tim. I, 5: 23, "Drink no longer water but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake . . ." would do well to remember that the accent should be emphasized on the word "little."

Drunkards can cause us to add a new line to the Litany.

CHAPTER III

COCKTAILS

COCKTAILS form a United States contribution to the world's nectars.

In spite of the fact that a resentful foreigner describes them as "the foulest drink known to man," they need not be wholly condemned.

There is, of course, a dark suspicion that the birth of the cocktail was not completely honest. Certain evidence points to the idea that an enterprising host, finding his supply of nectars too low to serve enough of any one of them, combined the dregs of a few bottles, treated them liberally with ice, shook well to confuse the connoisseurs, and served the result with a hopeful prayer.

It was probably an unpromising sort of party at which the guests were laboring to make conversation. The women seemed to cackle and the men were discomfortingly dull. When it was

discovered, after the host had served his nefarious mixture, that the women promptly seemed sparklingly vivacious and the men brilliantly epigrammatical, the transformation could not fail to establish the new concoction as socially acceptable.

At all events, Europe has adopted the things, and enshrined them in its stern rules of etiquette. They are entitled to a place on the menu—but are expected to keep their place. They have not, as it were, been elevated to superior prestige.

During Prohibition, however, we ourselves ignored the cocktail's place in the scheme of things. To us it was a jolly old drink, to be imbibed at any old time.

Here is an illuminating epigram which came out of Europe:

"Cold mutton stew, stale cigar-ends, breakfast in evening dress, *a cocktail after dinner,* the kiss of Evadna after the advent of Evangeline."

In short, my dears, we wandered far from the paths of righteous alcoholic etiquette during the recent graceless era. Even otherwise discriminating hosts have been known to flout the sacred

conventions and serve cocktails throughout the evening.

But one positively never should—really.

Our American cocktail, you see, is merely a development of the apéritif idea, the appetizer to stimulate the appetite for the epicurean dishes to follow. It was accepted by the connoisseurs strictly on this understanding. Like the gin-and-bitters, the sherry-and-bitters of traditional social usage, it is designed to whet the palate, and provoke the gay receptive mood.

It should be served in the shallow cocktail glass and taken in one swallow, half an hour before the meal. Two cocktails is the absolute limit. Positively. More than that ruins the palate for a pleasant appreciation of a good dinner and is an insult to the cook.

In fact, the more punctilious connoisseurs deplore the service of a cocktail at all, if superior nectars are to be provided with the courses of the dinner. Rather, they declare, should it be reserved for those occasions when the dinner is poor and the wines available decidedly inferior. A preliminary cocktail, concocted from hard

liquors, dulls the sensitive nuances of the palate for fine wine, takes the edge off its finer discrimination, they claim.

Wherefore the hostess, planning an arch-epicurean repast for social impressiveness, will do well to banish the cocktail from her menu. Given a worthy cellar from which to select the finer wines for her courses, she will substitute a fine sherry served in a glass which has been lightly rinsed in orange or Angostura bitters. The very fact that she serves the sherry in place of the cocktail is a joyous assurance that the nectars to follow are pleasantly worthy.

The effect of the sherry is graciously benign, less hectic and ostentatious than the cocktail. There is infinitely more "class" to it. It is favored at the officers' messes in the more aristocratic regiments; at formal embassy parties designed to aid diplomatic negotiations, and at the more intimate exclusive social functions of the great.

But whether one serves cocktails or sherries, the two-only limit is adamant. A third cocktail is utterly pernicious.

An experienced strong-minded butler is invaluable in these little matters. Hollywood, for instance, has so much to live down. Nevertheless, even under Prohibition, a handful of the most starry social arbiters of the colony, whose prestige remains unchallenged, had the forethought not only to lay in a benign pre-war stock, but to hire strong-minded butlers as well. At these homes, where some of the world's most glamorful celebrities have been entertained, any reckless yearns you may have for a third cocktail or apéritif will be firmly squelched by the butler, with respectful unawareness.

Wise hostesses, therefore, will train their spouses in the delicate ritual of precious nectars, where there is no butler to oversee the situation. A too-generous expansiveness is merely bad form.

Recently a new form of entertainment has arisen—the cocktail party. These are always entirely informal affairs, ostensibly held in good time for the guests to go on to dinner elsewhere. They, too, were the outcome of the Prohibition era, when it was presumed no liquor would be served at the ensuing dinners. They are highly

popular—often taking place before grand premières, first nights of opera, gala balls, or big public events.

But there isn't nearly such a good excuse for them now. However, they seem to have come to stay, since they are easy, cheerful, sociable, and call for no arduous planning on the part of the hosts.

A liberal supply of piquant canapés (see Chapter XVI) are served at these parties with the cocktails. Some hosts, wise in the knowledge that many of their guests may or may not dine afterward, even provide sandwiches and such like more substantial fare.

Naturally the two-cocktail limit is rarely strictly adhered to on these occasions. The more graceless hosts even serve whisky highballs and wine as well.

Actually, the cocktail party has almost no social standing amongst epicureans. However, even epicureans are not always assured of dining epicureanly afterward, and on such occasions they are apt to be less hypercritical.

The more discriminating host will serve just

two kinds of cocktails, for which the ingredients have been chosen with conscientious care. Guests are sternly admonished to select their favorite and stick to it. Nothing so dangerous as mixing one's cocktails. Once again, participants are earnestly admonished to abide by the Ten Commandments hereinbefore set forth. The very informality of the cocktail party reeks of temptations.

Directly one has achieved that pleasantly benign status in which the present company seems rather charming and one has a sense of rising to one's own best social attainment, no amount of persuasive cozening should tempt one to take "just one more." One's inhibitions should be happily relaxed but should remain under control at all times. "Just one more" is so very apt to ruin everything.

The preparation of cocktails must not be undertaken lightly. Experts have worked out a scientific combination of ingredients, and methods of mixing, which it is well for the amateur not to flout. It is given only to the few to experiment with original concoctions.

The mixing of cocktails has become a fine art. It calls for definite paraphernalia, too. I mean, a quart Mason jar is a highly unsatisfactory substitute for a cocktail shaker, for instance. Then, one needs a particularly good orange squeezer, and an ample supply of cracked ice. Connoisseurs insist that even the ice should be a superior form of congealed water—that one should live only in a locality where the ice can be relied upon!

The measuring glass should be exact—proportions being a vital matter. No guessing permitted. When the ingredients have all been assembled in the shaker, don't be niggardly about the shaking. Experts insist that the shaking should be vigorous, and maintained for a minimum of eight minutes. Cocktails must always be served very cold. A warm cocktail can blast your social prestige forever.

Nevertheless, we must recall that one of the most famous cocktail connoisseurs in the old days of San Francisco not only scorned the ice but disapproved of the shaking as well. With solemn

ritual, he would see that his ingredients were properly cold, measure them out with reverent ceremony, and mix them lovingly, slowly, with a long-handled spoon. But this fellow stood in a class by himself. His system takes more patience. He also had an impressive personality that enabled him to affect independent standards. In a case like that it is almost a separate career.

Gin and either French or Italian vermouth form the basis of the vast majority of cocktails. Most of these call for a "dash" of, say, curaçao, Angostura bitters, orange bitters, orange juice, lemon juice, almond extract, strained honey, etc., etc. Plenty of good cocktail recipe books available. However, whisky, rum, cider, brandy and even port wine are often used.

It is safer to pick your pet cocktails—say two or three types—and stick to them, gaining fame for their perfection. Easier to keep a stock of the right ingredients on hand. It's smarter to specialize—leave the wide variety to bartenders.

Before we leave the cocktails, and at the risk of being a bore, I must once more emphasize the

importance of quality over quantity. Simply cross those of your friends with a swill-complex off your list.

It is conceivable that a gentleman might so far forget himself as to imbibe beyond the polite limits, but he positively should not talk about it.

CHAPTER IV

WHISKY

WHISKY is a subject of heated controversial opinion amongst even the best epicures.

For instance, your wine connoisseur of fastidious palate holds it a gastronomical crime to include it in the service of any fine wines. As for the British habit of imbibing whisky with meals, he regards this as utterly preposterous, even when diluted liberally with mineral water. Utter ruination to the proper enjoyment of an epicurean meal, according to his notions.

Not that he bars whisky entirely from social cognizance, you understand. He avers that there are times and conditions under which this Gaelic product exactly fills the bill—if taken abstemiously.

This fellow concedes only a few rare occasions when whisky is appropriate. It goes down well, he says, after a heavy day's fishing or duck hunt-

ing, always providing that about two hours have elapsed since the last meal and before the next. It is also correct service around midnight, just before the party breaks up. It is incomparable as a nightcap, taken hot with plenty of water and a dash of lemon, if one wants to ward off a cold.

The American habit of combining it with ginger ale and calling it a highball he dismisses as strictly for the purpose of disguising the flavor of inferior brands.

However, as against this, we have the British defense. A famous brain surgeon of England insists that he prefers good whisky as the sole service throughout an evening, especially if the meal is of that superior "plain" genre which scorns continental falals. It forms, he says, a first-class cocktail and apéritif, far superior to sherry-and-bitters or the American concoctions that masquerade under that name. He vows that, providing the brand is unimpeachable, it is good for the stomach—always presuming it is imbibed in the right quantities. And never, never taken "straight." All epicures of all

grades of opinion deplore what they consider the graceless American habit of drinking whisky "straight," even with a "chaser." Not even a Scottish stomach, which can cope with more whisky than that of any other nation, can, they aver, be expected to survive the atrocity of "straight" whisky for long.

In any case, we are reminded, the American stomach can never hope to compete with the Scottish stomach when it comes to whisky. The Scottish stomach is a thing apart.

It is shockingly bad form to drink whisky at any time at all before noon.

No portion of whisky at any time should ever exceed two fingers. No use picking a chap with fat fingers to measure by, either. The righteous host will provide the correct whisky glasses, and in these "two fingers" means one and one-half inches. This must be well diluted with mineral water. No gentleman will ever accept more than two services of whisky on any one occasion. And if wines were served with the meal earlier in the evening, oh, my young friends, do be careful. Avoid the second two fingers at all costs.

If you allow your best judgment to lapse in this regard, don't be deceived into supposing yourself a social hit. The chances are you will become merely obnoxious. So few people can afford to mix whisky and wines.

You may lawfully consume two fingers at your club after a round of golf. If you wish to imbibe before the match, follow the British habit and partake of it with your lunch. If your resistance is weak, order fish instead of meat with this meal. Red meat and whisky are a combination for strong stomachs only.

For the benefit of a variety of temperaments, a group of doctors made some useful experiments a few years ago.

The report is that they secured four big monkeys in good health. Then they proceeded to ply these human ancestors with Irish, Scotch, English and United States whisky respectively—*i.e.*, one brand to one monkey.

No. 1, given Irish whisky (beyond the gentlemanly limits), soon became truculent; seemed to suffer from a persecution complex; wanted to

fight all and sundry, and was generally at war with the world.

No. 2, plied with Scotch whisky, became haughty, superior, overbearing, patronizing to an intolerable degree.

No. 3, on English whisky, became alarmingly pally and affectionate, and showed a marked disposition to embrace every one—including the experimenters.

No. 4, on United States whisky, became tearful, confessional, self-abased, groveling—a welter of self-pity.

The physicians were reported to have given the animals a week to sober up on between experiments, trying out each monkey on each kind of whisky, always with the same results.

Naturally, whisky partisans indignantly disbelieve the story.

As against the monkey experiments, there is an influential group of connoisseurs who insist that not the nationality of the whisky but the temperament of the individual is responsible for the ensuing effects. That, in fact, some imbibers would become objectionably truculent on an

excess of any kind of liquor; or haughty, or over-affectionate, or groveling, as the case may be. It is, they persist, unfair to blame the whisky.

Whisky proponents like to tell about some medical experiments on white rats. It seems another group of physicians dosed several generations of white rats with whisky over a long period. Certainly a few rats, they admit, went in for delirium tremens and ultimately met a drunkard's grave, but all that survived were, they insist, super-specimens of the rat tribe, their health perfect, their breath sweet, their dispositions gracious.

It was doubtless one of these physicians who coined the epigram, "Whisky is the enemy of bigotry and halitosis."

Personally, I am not prepared to accept the rat findings entirely. It is so very probable that the survivors of these experiments were the aristocrats of their race and drank like gentlemen, or else they had Scottish stomachs.

As this little book is designed hopefully to helping the women of America make a success of Repeal, and to discouraging reformers by

calking up the knot-holes, it is just as well to note that áll groups of whisky thought agree that a little more than a little is so very much too much.

When the British warship *Delhi* visited Los Angeles during the Olympics, the Admiral and officers entertained liberally on board. They had, of course, brought it with them. And it was pretty precious. They were also, it was suspected, picked men designed to do the Empire proper social credit.

At ten P.M. during the dancing, they served whisky. That was during the Prohibition era—and many Americans felt they had never tasted whisky before. It was so smooth and gentle. The navy bartender measured out the portions with infinite discretion—two fingers, and the glass filled up with mineral water to within half an inch of the brim.

As the British officers went up to secure refreshments for themselves and ladies between dances, one continually heard the order, "Two whiskies. One small one."

Now the small one was always for the lady, and measured just one finger.

"Why do you hold out on the ladies?" asked a graceless male guest.

"Why, because they are ladies," was the astonished answer from a British officer.

Incidentally, while parties on shore were not infrequently unmanageable, parties on the British man-o'-war remained the pink of joyous social propriety. Likewise, those fortunate enough to be included in the guest list are bragging on it yet. One usually careless American frankly gives the British naval bartender full credit for the fact that he himself emerged with honor from the test.

"When I went up for my fourth drink," he confided, "that chap smiled at me respectfully before I had time to give him my order.

" 'I know, sir. Stright soda, eh? 'Ere you are, sir,' he said, with a friendly nod. And blest if he didn't hand me straight soda-water. I took the hint. I wouldn't have had the nerve to argue with him."

Whisky was not popular until the seventeen

hundreds, although a bright Arab discovered the knack of distilling in the tenth century. It has become a hallowed process, since then. It is distilled from starchy grains such as wheat, barley, rye, rice, corn, and even potatoes. New whisky is an abomination. At one time it used to be sent around the world in the holds of windjammers to age—in wooden casks. The sea and the gentle roll of the ship was supposed to be peculiarly advantageous to the graceful aging of whisky. At all events, we are assured that no quick way of aging whisky has yet been devised—hence the magic of those words "12 Years in Bottle" which adorn epicurean labels. Don't forget it is aged in wood before bottling.

Whisky comes from Scotland, England, Canada and the United States in its more approved forms.

The kind known as rye is made in good old Pennsylvania, and is distilled from rye, barley and malt. Kentucky puts out a corn whisky yclept Bourbon—which is harsher, stronger, and usually cheaper than the Scotch, English or other United States brands which favor finer grains.

Which is probably why it is so often disguised as a "mint julep"! (Hear the Colonel roar!)

The kind of whisky the bootleggers were wont to put over on Prohibition stomachs is utterly déclassé. Even when it was properly distilled, it was much too young and raw.

Even the best kinds, taken in excess, do appalling things to livers. The new raw kinds do it twice as swiftly.

Voilà, fair hostess, be at particular pains to delve into the ancestry of your whiskies. Serve only the best, and never make the mistake of being too liberal with it.

If there is any doubt about your still being sober, you are not.

CHAPTER V

GIN

GIN, the very best gin, is the pride of Holland. A Dutchman's opinion of the sort of gin we dared to consume under Prohibition reeks of contempt. When the fearsome stuff had the effrontery to masquerade under a Dutch label, it broke his heart.

There are, however, authoritative experts to insist that British gin is far superior in flavor to Dutch gin, and that some pretty good gin can come out of the United States. Still, Holland can claim the greater fame.

Of course that Prohibition gin wasn't really gin at all. It was alcohol merely flavored with oil of glycerine and juniper berry. The gin that sets a Dutchman bragging is a compounded spirit, prepared by distilling pure spirit with juniper berries, coriander seeds, angelica seeds and some precious secret essential oils. Gin pro-

duced by the distilling process has a vastly more delicate flavor, and has a more mellowing effect on the tummy than any achieved by mere mixing. The best gin has an alcoholic strength of about 36 per cent, although there are 48 per cent brands, to be handled only by experts.

Ever since Charles Dickens had Sary Gamp partaking of her thimbleful o' comfort, gin has been regarded as a vastly better spirit for women than whisky. In the main, women prefer gin as being far less disastrous to the complexion.

However, American men have taken to gin like mice to cheese. Two-thirds of our cocktails call for gin as the main ingredient. This does not necessarily make them effeminate, as Dutchmen will readily agree. But, as is usual with the American male of the species, he seems to think it makes the thing more masculine if he takes ten thimblefuls at a time instead of one.

It is this sort of thing which makes the connoisseur despair of him. So much affectionate pride and ritual go into the preparation of the best gin. It is a sacred ceremonial. Doled out tenderly in precious thimblefuls at the right time

in the right company, it can indeed be a boon and a blessing to mankind.

Dishonest gin should, of course, be completely ostracized from polite society. Even disguised in cocktails it's an affront, on a par with serving methylated spirits.

But honest gin, now. . . . It shines at its best served straight, in a thimble-sized glass which has been rinsed out with orange or Angostura bitters. The ideal time for this is about twenty minutes before partaking of a good Anglo-Saxon, Scandinavian or Teutonic meal. It is the preferred apéritif for a meal at which beer, ale or stout are to be served, as distinct from wine. And, if you are sure of your gin, one drink is enough. In fact, it's almost blasphemy to overdo it. That is the exact amount to warm and stimulate the average stomach to its best appreciation of a good solid meal, to form the finer social lubricant.

The same quantity per person should be adhered to if the gin is used in cocktails. Your real connoisseur will choose his cocktail ingredients with the most delicate judgment. He will use only the finest vermouth, for instance,

or the most superior oranges. Only if he is uncertain about the ancestry of his gin will he permit any flavor to swamp its benign effects. As for the button onion occasionally added by *outre* souls to a gin cocktail—well, that almost labels it as déclassé gin, to be heavily disguised.

Gin is a better summer drink than whisky, not so heating. A gin fizz, with a waft of orange-flower flavor, finds peculiar favor after a round of golf, a game of polo, a strenuous tennis match, and may be served in the middle of a summer afternoon along with light sandwiches, if dinner is not too close at hand. *A* gin fizz—not some gin fizzes.

Lemon and orange fizzes can be greatly improved with a dash of gin and a *soupçon* of sugar. These, too, may be served with light lunches and refreshments, but not with heavy dinners.

Two of the most satisfactory gin cocktails are as follows:

(1) One part gin, one-half part Italian vermouth, a mere shadow of Angostura bitters, a few dewdrops of crème de menthe. For

art's sake, a peppermint cherry may be added to each glass the very moment before it is served, so that its flavor will not be too obtrusive. This is called a "coxcomb."

(2) One part gin, one part French vermouth, a hint of bitters, and an olive in place of the cherry. This is our old friend Martini, hard to improve upon.

With both of these gin cocktails, cheese canapés should be served. That is the ideal combination.

Gin, say the connoisseurs, is a desirable prelude to a dinner calling for mustard with the meat course—roast beef, pork, baked ham, etc.

For a long drink, unlike whisky, ginger ale makes an acceptable partner. It must, however, be a light sparkling ginger ale, not too gingery. And one finger of gin is the limit of the allowance permitted.

One more word to the wise. Inferior synthetic gins are disastrous to romance—so very hard on the breath. No use putting your faith in any of the fancy gums and cloves; they will only aggravate the situation. Even one thimble-

ful can blast your social popularity from this angle.

But, alas, even the noblest of gins is not entirely guiltless in this respect when taken in excess of the prescribed allowance. So from every esthetic and genteel angle, do, do be abstemious.

The best way to cultivate a taste for sobriety is to reside for some time with a drunkard.

CHAPTER VI

BRANDY

REAL brandy is distilled from wines. So far, France holds the pennant for the best brandies, and the best French brandy is known as cognac.

Distillers famous for their brandies use only the finest crops of grapes, and certain districts in France concentrate on raising superfine crops solely for this purpose. It takes 1,000 gallons of grape wine to make 150 gallons of brandy.

Portugal and Spain have occasionally been able to challenge French supremacy in this field, when a specially fine grape crop has been obtained. California and Australia, also famous for their grapes and wines, can often produce this precious *eau-de-vie*.

In France the best brandies, achieved with such painstaking devotion, are used mainly as liqueurs—*i.e.*, in thimblefuls, served after dinner

as a sublime digestive with or in the *café noir.*

But here again Britain has shown disturbing independence, and the brandy-and-soda drink so celebrated throughout the Empire affronts the dictums of the Latin countries.

It's jolly when there is an argument like this, as it permits the hosts so much latitude, and they can righteously favor whichever authority they please.

Brandy-and-soda is served *à la* the whisky highball, in a tall glass, with one or two fingers of brandy, according to the insidiousness of the vintage. It is, however, almost an unpardonable crime to so serve the finer liqueur brandies.

In a general way, brandy before meals is frowned upon by the epicures. For which reason a brandy highball is regarded as a between-meal beverage. It is particularly favored in tropical countries. Americans, as usual, insist upon serving it with ice, but you can blast a Britisher's opinion of you by adding ice to his drink.

Inferior brandies are, however, best disguised with mineral water or ginger ale—and the ice

may also help in this matter. During Prohibition, California bootleggers provided a great many grape brandies which were used for beverages, but which in normal times would only have been used for cooking. At that, they were easier on the stomach than new whisky.

If you are the proud possessor of any superior brandies, cherish them as far too precious to dilute or disguise. Reserve them for epicurean liqueurs, and don't be tempted to waste them on vulgar uneducated palates.

There are many good brandy cordials made from apricots, peaches, berries, cherries, apples and the like (California excels in this type), which form a delightful liqueur served after the dessert. They are sweet and pungent, and have a kind and mellowing effect, aiding in blending the courses and liquids served during the dinner. Tiny liqueur glasses are obtainable for the purpose.

In any case, all types of brandies should be served sparingly. Here again a too fulsome liberality is merely ignorant bad form.

Brandies are used widely in cooking, especially

in epicurean sauces for game and desserts. These cooking varieties are inexpensive, and are in high favor with master chefs.

Once in a way a dash of brandy is used in cocktails, but no matter how delectable to taste, connoisseurs frown upon the custom for stomachic reasons. Brandies of any kind are undesirable on an empty stomach.

Brandy is strong fare, except in the tiniest doses. For this reason your brandy addict is regarded as the most hopeless type of drunkard, bound for the last tragic stages of alcoholism. It is, you see, an essence—a concentrated distillation of fine wines. Aged in bottle it becomes more and more potent.

Old Samuel Johnson caused a lot of trouble when he stated didactically:

"Claret is liquor for boys; port wine for men; but he who aspires to be a hero must drink brandy."

It has, however, helped us to understand all the futile heroic aspirations of the irreclaimable brandy-soak. Poor misguided yearner, he can never be cured.

Russia's vodka, its national drink, has all the vices of brandy and none of its graces. Which probably proved rough on Russians.

The cocktail books offer us various recipes which call for brandy—usually mixed with gin. These outrage all the canons of the epicures. First, they shudder to consider a good brandy ruined with gin. Second, they shudder to include a cheap brandy at all. And third, they gasp, brandy is a digestive, never an appetizer.

And in any case only the most reserved of men, with a guiltless conscience, can ever risk mixing two distilled liquors at one sitting. That's not courage. It is courting immediate disaster.

"We can all tolerate the weak brother a little, but the man who is primarily and essentially a fool should be abandoned."

CHAPTER VII

LIQUEURS

LIQUEURS are always served to top off a good meal. They form a quintessential essence, prepared with almost hallowed devotion. I mean, the best liqueurs known to mankind have come out of monasteries, contrived with spiritual inspiration by men isolated from the world.

The product of the Benedictine and Chartreuse monks has been challenged but never surpassed by laymen. They are regarded as precious priceless nectar, to be made by one generation, nursed and treasured through successive generations, for the delight of connoisseurs thirty, forty, sixty or one hundred years hence. It's a sacred duty to epicurean mankind. Many of those old monks would rise up in their graves with horror if they knew that some coarse unappreciative palate was slopping down their essence of nectar.

Liqueurs are listed on *haute-monde* wine lists by their dates. "Old Liqueur Brandy, 1848." "Special Reserve, 60 Years Old." "Grand Marnier (guaranteed) 1830," and so on. Think of the sacrilege of just swilling down such precious fluid! It must be sipped with reverence and high ritual.

The best-known brands of liqueur are benedictine; yellow and green chartreuse; curaçao, green, white or orange; kirschwasser and kümmel, the last two being German products. Then, of course, there is crème de menthe, green or white, and good old cognac.

However, there are some fifty brands of liqueurs on the market, and one can find connoisseurs to swear by any one of them, while disagreeing violently with each other. The fact is that certain types can prove the superior brand in any one year, since, like wines, so much depends on the vintage, the age, as well as the preparation.

Given a party with no experts on hand, and palates still suffering from the depredations of Prohibition, a host with suitable aplomb can

safely serve slightly plebeian brands of liqueurs, always providing he serves them with the proper ritual and rapturous solemnity.

In fact, so much of the service of the finer wines depends on this reverential attitude toward them that it is just as well to cultivate it on the lesser brands against the day when your own palate can tolerate nothing but the best. It's part of the education of an epicure. It's the difference between a church social and a diplomatic dinner at, say, the French Legation in Washington, on a day when an important Minister of Foreign Affairs is to be cozened into some vital concessions.

Scorn that cocktail recipe which calls for more than the merest dewdrop of any form of liqueur. Yea, even unto the stone-fruit cordials. Sheer atrocity. With the one exception of cognac, conceded as a rapturous condiment in *café noir*, no liqueur should be polluted by the addition of any other liquid, no matter how excellent. It is tantamount to pouring one's champagne in the soup "because it all goes down the same way."

Drink to me only with thine eyes,
If thou art prone to sin
So reprehensibly, my pet,
As to mix liqueur with gin.

CHAPTER VIII

WINES

IT is told of King Edward VII that he once felt called upon to reprove a Foreign Ambassador at his table.

He had, you see, honored the gentleman by having a peculiarly fine French wine served at dinner . . . a revered and precious vintage of the highest quality.

The Ambassador, seated at his right, lifted his glass and drank the wine at one gulp.

King Edward gazed at him reproachfully, and admonished:

"Mr. Ambassador, when you meet a great wine of France you breathe it, hold it to the light, you touch it to your lips, you put your glass down and talk about it. . . ."

As to talking about it, we have the story of the gourmet uncle who was entertaining his young sprig of a nephew, just home from col-

lege. Uncle, in his expansive hospitality, ordered a bottle of the finest wine in his cellar. Nephew partook of it without comment. Uncle began to think this precious nectar was wasted on the young squirt, so his next order to his butler was for an inferior wine.

Nephew seemingly drank this with relish.

"Fine wine, sir," he said. "Very excellent."

"Why, you young jackass," snorted Uncle. "The first bottle was beyond compare, but this stuff, bah!"

"I know," smiled the young man comfortably. "This one needs recommending, the other didn't."

In a general way, it is safer to compliment the host on his fine wines; he can so easily be counted upon to have an Edward VII complex in the matter.

It is highly desirable to cultivate your own taste and discrimination for wines if you would stand well with the best hosts. And, ahem, to have a host, you must be a host.

Your duties as a host are even more important. You owe it to the honor of your country

to aid in elevating its drinking standards to the loftiest pinnacle of social distinction. You must neither affront the palate of an epicurean guest, nor pander to the low-brow tastes of an ignoramus.

Nothing can stir up more emotional argument than the subject of wines. Infinite reverence, prayer, time and artistry go into their proper preparation. Every one of the several hundred famous wines are the products of geniuses in their line. The great wine makers have the souls of artists. And, like artists in other walks of life, they are strong in their hypercritical preferences and in their interpretations of what constitutes the true and the beautiful. Every wine artist has his ardent disciples, so there are lots of jolly schools of wine-thought to choose from.

There is, however, one point upon which all agree—the precious ritual and respect with which wines must be served and enjoyed.

Even the *vin ordinaire* of France, the Chianti of Italy, the dago-red of California, the common table wines of the masses, must be served

with a due regard for the niceties of social procedure.

And, of course, when it comes to the specialty wines, it is unthinkable that you should outrage the proprieties.

If you can afford the fine wines, you can also afford to learn how to use them. To misuse or misplace them on your menu is as crass a *faux pas* as using "ain't" and "we done" in polite conversation.

The light clarets *à la* California's dago-red, or the French *vin ordinaire* are served right through the meal as a family table wine. That's the kind you usually get with an ordinary restaurant table-d'hôte with which wine is included. Even a light cocktail beforehand is unnecessary. These wines belong with the second-best china and linen, in the home.

They are so light, agreeable and healthful that in the Latin countries they are served even to adolescents. At my French convent they always served *vin ordinaire* to us on Saints' Days and holidays.

The portions run about a pint for an adult,

a small glassful for a youngster. Claret glasses resemble baby tumblers.

All white wines should be served cold, whether still or sparkling—preferably kept in a refrigerator for a couple of hours before serving. High-class hocks and champagnes are best packed in ice in a pail. No red wine should ever be warmed. "Taking the chill off" will ruin a good wine. Never put ice *in* wine.

Clarets and burgundies should be decanted at least two hours before needed and should be placed in the dining-room where they will approximate the temperature of the room when served.

Decanting wines is a delicate process. The metal capsule, all wax, dirt and dust must be carefully removed before drawing the cork. The point of the corkscrew must be placed in the exact center of the cork and screwed in very slowly. The cork must be drawn without jerking. A napkin should be used to hold the bottle. The mouth of the bottle must be gently wiped after the cork is drawn.

When several different wines are to be served,

clean glasses must be used for each kind. Glasses should be only two-thirds full, never filled to the brim.

When it comes to planning the wine menu for a formal dinner, the arguments begin. Who shall decide, when experts disagree?

For instance, seeking guidance, I approached a famous gourmet for his idea of the perfect repast, but made the ghastly mistake of suggesting:

"Now, first the cocktail, what shall it be?"

He positively snarled at me.

"Good Lord, if you are going to begin with a cocktail, serve them any old cheap wines. Serve them imitation champagne, they'll never know the difference."

Ouch! When I had groveled sufficiently for forgiveness, he launched into a long lecture on the whys and wherefores of these precious nectars.

Sherry, he assured me—sherry-and-bitters, half an hour before the meal—was the only possible apéritif for a wine dinner.

A light white wine, Sauterne or hock, goes

best with the fish, unless it's oysters, when Cassis is more *sympatica.* A good claret with the entrée. Burgundy with the bird. Champagne with the dessert. Liqueur brandy with the coffee. Whisky highballs just before the party breaks up at midnight.

But if you think he gave me that information in one paragraph, you are wrong. He went into long elaborate histories and explanations of every kind of wine he suggested, and just why such and such a flavor or bouquet went with those particular dishes. All gourmets do.

That, however, is a useful summary for a hostess to keep in mind. Since, while the gourmets disagree on *kinds* of wines to be served with each course, they hold to this standard pretty well for *types* suitable throughout the meal. This rule has been arrived at by careful research through the ages, and is designed to occasion the greatest sense of satisfaction with the least embarrassment of conflict in gourmet innards.

There are dozens of kinds of white wines, of clarets, of burgundies, of champagnes and of

liqueurs, but their place on the menu remains very much the same.

I even found three experts to agree that madeira or sherry are excellent wines to serve when a soup course is added. It is not necessary to serve wine with soup.

There are connoisseurs so alarmingly well informed that you can blindfold them while they sip a wide variety of similar wines, and they will not only name the brands but give the date of the vintage as well.

I have one collector of old sherry who simply cannot be deceived. He owns a luscious cellar stocked with famous vintages throughout the years. One night he offered to name them all blindfolded. We tried to trick him by mixing a French brand with Amontillado—and he spotted us right away.

We can rarely hope to become as expert as this, but nice hostesses will try to inform themselves on a few tried and safe brands and then plan their menus accordingly. Wiser to specialize in a few first-class menus beyond reproach

than to wax too enterprising in the valor of ignorance.

There are any number of good brands of German, French and California light white wines to be served with fish courses for the most part. Most of the German ones are made of Riesling grapes, which have an exceptionally crisp flavor. Still Moselles go well with fish, too.

In the matter of the clarets, for instance, almost every vineyard can be depended upon to produce an extra good vintage every few years. Haut-Medoc in France has the highest reputation for them, but California can hold its own pretty well and will keep a good customer well informed. The same may be said of burgundies. Very old burgundies are pretty scarce anyway, so both Australia and California will soon be in worthy competition.

Sparkling burgundies go down very well with most light meat courses—and when a bird is to follow, it is well not to have a heavy meat course.

After champagne, sherry, muscatel, angelica and a light port form the best dessert wines.

Port wine is particularly acceptable with fruits and nuts. You won't find all European nations very strong for port in a general way. It originally came out of Portugal, and one reason why the British favor it so strongly at the close of the dinner is that Britain and Portugal had an economic treaty way back a century or two ago, by which Portuguese wines were to be exchanged for British commodities. So the British Government went in for exploiting port wine with as much vim as the U. S. A. tried to exploit total abstinence later on. The British exploitation worked better!

However, lots of countries produce port wine nowadays, and there is vast rivalry over the various brands. It is a wine to be served in largish wine glasses, sipped with relish, held up to the light, and talked over. It is not necessary to serve a liqueur after port, but if one is desired, cognac goes down best.

Our own U. S. A. port, made chiefly in California, was gradually winning a high place in epicurean favor when Prohibition set in. It is used a great deal for sacramental wines.

It is also good form to serve a glass of port or sherry, with perhaps a piece of cake, during a morning call or instead of afternoon tea.

One lingers and chats over port. Which is one reason why Englishmen approve it for that period at the dinner table before they join the ladies in the drawing-room. For quite a while, masculinity decided port was not a feminine drink. But doctors proved obliging and began prescribing it for anemic maidens—so there you are. It is supposed to enrich the blood—which, overdone, brings on gout and expensive complaints like that!

In the service of all table wines, enough is as good as a feast. Most courses call for but one helping. Two helpings of any one wine through a wine dinner is the limit. And then don't forget the glasses must not be filled beyond a two-thirds measurement.

Mixing one's drinks is always a risky proceeding. The wines prescribed for the different courses are chosen as being *sympatica* with each other in that order. No switching allowed.

It is not in the least necessary to serve a dif-

ferent wine with every course. Indeed, this custom may safely be reserved for highly formal affairs, calling for a little extra dash.

There are any number of good light wines which may be served clear through the meal. Or, if preferred, where a suitable apéritif has been served beforehand, it is perfectly good form to serve no other wine at all until the main dish is placed on the table. Then a light sparkling Moselle or burgundy will prove adequate for the rest of the meal.

If one has a taste for the more concentrated wines—sherries, madeiras, muscatels of a sweeter genre—the light wines may be omitted altogether and the heavier wine reserved for the dessert course.

The important thing is to acquaint one's self with the correct nectars to accompany certain types of dishes—and then plan omissions to taste. It is, for instance *verboten* to serve sweet concentrated wines with the earlier courses, or at any time before light sparkling vintages.

King David sang of "The wine that maketh glad the heart of man," and King Solomon was

even more committal with "Give strong drink to him that is ready to perish and wine unto him that be of heavy heart. Let him drink and forget his poverty and remember his misery no more."

Which advice is full of comfort to the hasty. But in writing this little book, I am also being Solomonical—for the gentleman so celebrated for his wisdom likewise admonished many times: "Be not among the wine-bibbers." "Tarry not long over the wine." "He that loveth wine . . . shall not be rich." "Wine is a mocker, and strong drink is raging."

I am sure so wise a man meant only exactly what he said about "him that is ready to perish." He was not in any way referring merely to a fellow who was in the throes of a disturbing love affair, or whose domestic or business affairs were a bit uncomfortable. He said "perish" and he meant "perish" . . . *i.e.*, to lose life, or to decay and die.

Wherefore it behooves us to use the utmost good sportsmanship in interpreting the wise

King Solomon and be dead sure the "perish" has set in before drowning our misery.

And, ahem, there was no distilled liquor in Solomon's day, so, on the most liberal interpretation, he did not mean whisky, gin, brandy, rum. What he meant by "strong" drink and what we mean by it are very different concoctions.

Don't let the men misinterpret Solomon on you, sisters. Or trump up any of that "perish" stuff out of season.

But do use your finest endeavor to win the gentlemen to a righteous enjoyment of those products of the Vine, which asks so plaintively, "Should I leave my wine which cheereth God and man?" (Judges, 9:13).

Thus only can the hostesses of the United States be honored above all women.

IAGO: *"Good wine is a familiar spirit if well used."*

—SHAKESPEARE

CHAPTER IX

RUM

RUM, as distinct from gin, is a man's drink. Bold, bad, pirate stuff and all that.

It is either very plebeian (*à la* the "grog" rationed out to the British navy, that Britannia may continue to rule the waves) or very smart, according to lineage and quality.

It is a spirit distilled from molasses, or the residue of sugar-cane, and comes chiefly from the West Indies—with Jamaica enjoying particular prestige.

If you are fortunate enough to possess some specially good rum, dole it out in teaspoonfuls. It can lend no end of sophisticated éclat to a cup of India-Ceylon tea. Thus can the innocence of a tea-party be sullied.

It also enjoys the reputation of being the arch-ingredient for a superior eggnog. If, therefore, you are inspired to give an eggnog party on some

Christmas, New Year or Sabbath morning, here is a precious recipe which Delmonico's used to swear by:

> Have a punch bowl sufficiently large to hold three quarts. Crack eight fresh eggs, separate the yolks from the whites, and whip the whites to a light froth. Add eight tablespoonfuls of powdered sugar to the yolks and whip while slowly pouring in one pint of Jamaica rum and two quarts of fresh milk. Pour the frothed whites over the whole, and place in a cool spot until needed. Serve in tumblers.

Good rum is also excellent for "keeping the weather out." It is in high favor combined with hot water, sugar and a dash of lemon, before sallying forth in stormy climes. That's why seafaring men wax so jovial about their "Heigho, and a bottle of rum."

Some one once said that rum was "a gift of the Tropics to the frozen North." Which, however, doesn't prevent its being duly imbibed in the Tropics by big, strong he-men (or those with aspirations).

There is a seductive Planter's Punch which

they offer one in Bermuda, highly popular in the navy set.

It is composed of one pint of rum, one quart of sparkling Moselle, one quart of fruit juice (pineapple or grapefruit). It goes down remarkably well.

But it's insidious stuff, and you are strongly advised to keep your discretion well on tap. I mean, don't risk a second helping until you are quite sure how the first is going to behave.

Quite deplorable to become "beyond one's self" in that critical experienced company.

Doctors recommend rum for colds, but one does not need to call in a doctor for this old and tried prescription:

> Hang one hat on a bed-post. Make a stiff toddy with two fingers of rum, filling the glass with hot water. Add two cubes of sugar and a slither of lemon peel. Then sit up in bed and drink it until you see two hats. Next, snuggle down into bed and smile as you benignly drop off into a blissful sleep.

There will not be the slightest excuse for a second toddy the next night.

There is a Bacardi rum used in nefarious cocktails, which, however, have no social standing outside of the U. S. A. Only the toughest stomach can stand 'em, especially when gin is added.

A sad Frenchman recently remarked that the most horrible thing the World War brought upon France was the innovation of the American cocktail, the rum one being the most iniquitous and responsible for corrupting French manners.

You won't find rum on the more stylish wine lists on its own merits. It has almost no table prestige. But as an ingredient for sauces, served with mushrooms or game; as a substitute for the brandy in mincemeat and Christmas puddings: as an enhancement to the charms of an epicurean omelet, it is hard to rival. It can even do handsome duty in such desserts as trifle.

But we may as well recognize that rum is in, but not of, society.

DON JUAN: *"There's naught, no doubt, so much the spirit calms,*
As rum—and true religion."

—BYRON

CHAPTER X

CHAMPAGNE

CHAMPAGNE is the pride of France. It takes its name from a district which not only grows superlative grapes for the purpose, but whose population is largely dedicated to its production.

It is used for many purposes besides christening ships.

At the height of the swaggerful prosperity of these United States it stood at the zenith of social acclaim, and, while the rival countries sneered at what they derisively called our "champagne standard," we really stood the envied of the world. France, in particular, naturally approved of our adoption of this form of "guinea stamp."

There are still vintages of champagne extant that date back over eighty years. Connoisseurs will tell you that a champagne less than twenty

years old is unfit for human consumption. A good vintage calls for prayer and thanksgiving and the blessings of the church, since it presages honor and prosperity for generations to come. Anyway, to him that makes, if not to him that takes!

The process of achieving it was invented in the eighteenth century by one Perignon, who thereby succeeded in transforming a flat, uninteresting white wine into a sparkling, effervescent creator of gracious mirth and exuberant jollity . . . nectar for the gods in festive mood.

Good champagne is never cheap. Wherefore it is ordinarily served with the dessert as a scintillating culmination of a perfect culinary achievement. When, therefore, the Americans in the exuberance of their pre-war plutocracy started serving it clear through from the cocktail period to the final breaking up of the party, the world gasped.

The champagne cocktail sets an exacting standard for the host. Outside of a rich fine old brandy liqueur after dinner, no other wines may succeed champagne (with grace) upon the

menu. It is appropriate with every course and enhances the gastronomic perfections thereof. Naturally, too, one must not serve a crude, coarse repast with champagne. But who would wish to? Gastronomic blasphemy!

Champagne is served in wide-topped, shallow goblets designed to give its fairy effervescence full play. The best champagne continues to fizz in the goblet for a much longer period than the lesser brands. It should be imbibed while still effervescent. One shudders to recall a graceless *outre* soul who shamelessly declared that she was "waiting for the fizz to settle" before partaking of the nectar. People who feel like that about it should be restricted to flat beer.

Even at the famous Savoy Hotel in London one can pay a dollar a glass for a cherished vintage of aged champagne. The least expensive is fifty cents a glass. A pint bottle serves six glasses. As with wines, the glass should never be more than two-thirds filled.

Where champagne is to be served throughout the evening, a dry quality is best. The sweet

champagnes are only approved with the desserts and after.

There are some thirty-five brands of unimpeachable champagnes, on which as many famous houses stake their integrity. There are some dozen champagnes for less epicurean palates and less affluent purses. When the latter are to be used, it is just as well to provide some other kind of cocktail—preferably sherry-and-bitters. Those in which gin is the foundation spirit, since they dull the palate, can be useful to allay criticism!

Rather than serve an inferior brand of champagne, it is wiser to select an honest sparkling Moselle or burgundy on its own merits. There are sparkling red and white burgundies, hocks, Moselles, muscatels galore in excellent standing. There is also infinite argument amongst the quidnuncs as to which courses on the menu they are best served with. This is always advantageous for the average hostess, as it permits her so much latitude. She can merely indicate that the service selected is her own preference—and let the quidnuncs rave.

Prior to Prohibition the United States was gradually winning a reputation for champagnes and sparkling wines. Given proper forethought, some of these should now be reaching superfine quality. In fact, disturbing as the interval of the Eighteenth Amendment was to our native vineyardists from a profit angle, time heals all wounds, and it should have inevitably aged and mellowed the quality of their wares to lofty standards.

I asked a cosmopolitan shipping nabob for his idea of a perfect menu. This was his choice:

Apéritif: Beyhree (sherry).

Soup: Green turtle—served with old Buhl madeira.

Fish: Baby halibut or King salmon—served with still white Moselle.

Meat: Lamb cutlets—served with sparkling burgundy.

Bird: Grouse—served with the salad, and sparkling burgundy.

Sweet: Baked rice-pudding—served with old sherry.

Fruits and nuts. Old port.

Café noir and cognac.

Not a drop of champagne there, you see. But that was because he was a Britisher and wanted that final port.

Later I received a note from him. He had consulted with a famous New York gourmet in the interval. He felt that honor demanded he should inform me that his friend considered the sparkling burgundy a foul drink with the grouse, and insisted that "a decent red burgundy, such as Clos de Vougeot or Pommard," be substituted. As for the sparkling burgundy with the lamb chops, "For pity's sake, substitute a decent claret." He preferred, the New Yorker stated, "the English way of drinking sparkling Moselle right through the meal as the only wine after a sherry-and-bitters apéritif. Otherwise adopt the French method, and serve your sparkling Moselle only with the dessert."

So there you are. They are both gourmets and who shall decide which palate is the more righteous?

Again, I captured an Anglo-American nabob from Singapore, who is the social arbiter in his realm.

Given the selfsame dinner menu, he vehemently insisted that, while he approved the sherry-and-bitters apéritif, he vetoed any wine with the soup. French Sauterne or German hock was infinitely better with the fish. Claret, and only claret, could possibly be considered with the lamb chops. And a white burgundy was infinitely preferable with the bird. He disapproved of anything but champagne with the dessert, even if the budget would run to only one glass apiece. He passed the cognac with the coffee, but insisted whisky highballs should be served three hours later in the evening.

Hence, if a hostess keeps within a certain restricted area in the choice of her wine menu, she is fairly safe.

This same expert assured me that French champagnes are the only real stuff. The German brands are much sweeter, and can only righteously be served with the dessert. The British and Americans find that the extra-dry brands go best with their national cookery. He predicted that California would evolve an extra-

dry brand that would meet high popularity in Anglo-American circles.

Ah, yes, and one more point. Gourmets everywhere agree that it is a gastronomic crime to smoke during a meal at any old time if wines are served, and specifically with champagne. Simply cut such people off your list—or invite them after dinner.

When Count Keyserling visited this country, he insisted that lecture dates should include a host who would provide him with a pint of champagne for dinner every evening.

This did not go down so well with women's clubs as such. But the interesting dénouement was that some way, somehow, a host was indeed found for him, in every city, willing to fulfill the stipulation.

Far from being shocked at what the mere public considered an impertinence in a Prohibition country, possessors of pre-war champagne stock welled with sympathy for the Count, and there were often competitors for his company on those terms.

As against that, one of those selfsame hosts,

entertaining another equally distinguished foreign guest, was shocked to the point of refusal when the fellow asked for a glass of beer with dinner after a preliminary champagne cocktail. That, if you like, was an outrage!

These champagne hosts are apt to have standards all their own. They can forgive an epicure anything—a plebeian palate nothing.

Ah, yes, and there was another celebrated lecturer. He always fortified himself with a drink before going onto the platform. At first, he told me, he wasn't much of a connoisseur, and any old drink was acceptable.

He was later to discover that the various beverages had a very different effect upon his rhetoric. Beer, he vowed, proved soothing but slowed him up. Whisky made him feel a bit superior and patronizing, but added nothing to his wit. Brandy made him feel daring, and caused him to waive much of his usual discretion. But champagne made him feel sparkling, gay, naughtily satirical, rather dashing.

I suspect, however, there must be a certain fund of wit to draw upon. You can depend

on acquiring a certain sense of gayety on champagne, but the brilliant satire might prove illusive. It is possible that the people who sigh that champagne gives them a headache the morning after are in this class. Just as well not to expect too much, even of the queen of wines.

"Their heads sometimes so little that there is no room for wit; sometimes so long that there is no wit for so much room."

—FULLER

CHAPTER XI

BEER

IN its beginnings, beer was a home-brew. We just turned back the pages of history during Prohibition.

Rather more than a thousand years ago some Bavarian monks saw vast possibilities in brewing beer for profit, and after that they soon managed to establish a monopoly. These pious fathers also managed to win many converts through its benign influence. Even if the kind served with free meals was not exactly the superior quality retained for their own use. In fact, one rather gathers that the laity received a quality of beer not unlike that permissible under the Volstead Act, even when they paid for it.

It took a few hundred years to snatch the beer monopoly away from the good friars.

First-class water is very important to the brewing of beer. Hence one of the first brew-

eries, as we know them, was established in Munich—because the River Isar has such superior water.

After that there was some pretty hefty rivalry—based upon the claims of superior water in certain districts, all over western Europe, with Bavaria holding the pennant until this day. Round about fifteen hundred and something, many towns in Germany were mainly populated by brewery workers. Taverns cropped up in all the rest of the towns and villages. England and Holland soon fell into line with gusto, it being discovered that beer was the best of all cheap alcoholic drinks.

There have been efforts to raise certain brands of beer to aristocratic standing, chiefly by giving them a special name and charging more for them.

The most ardent beer devotees still insist that "While some beer is better than other beer, there is no bad beer."

You have to be an indiscriminate devotee to feel that way about it.

Either way, we may as well concede that beer is a low-brow drink. Once in a way it is admitted to high society. Just as society people will often amuse themselves by visiting slum restaurants, patronizing cheap vaudeville shows, entertaining low-brow celebrities, they usually wish one to consider it rather a joke when they give beer parties.

There are, however, high low-brows who stand loyal to beer and honestly prefer it above all drinks for certain specified occasions. These like to remind us that even kings have condescended, with relish, and that time was when certain monarchs of minor principalities (notably in Germany) demanded their tribute in hogsheads of fine beer.

The trouble with beer devotees is that, for the most part, they have failed to hedge it around with the nicer etiquette. Indeed, there is a marked disposition to regard the fellow who can drink the most beer and remain above the table as the best connoisseur. This is to be deplored.

A few conscientious high low-brows have endeavored to combat this state of affairs. They honestly prefer beer to wines—and the kinds of food that set best with it—yet they don't want to be classed amongst the swilling barbarians.

In these circles there is a refined effort to get beer drinkers to think in pints, rather than in quarts and gallons. Americans at large chiefly adore beer because they do think of it in gallons and barrels. A pint strikes them as a mere teaser. Which is a pity.

Even the best beer can ruin a fine French or Italian dinner. It goes down best with a German menu, and is not too utterly *outre* with a solid Anglo-Saxon meal. Beer seems to be peculiarly *sympatica* with cheeses, onions, garlic, pickles, cabbage, smoked and salted meats, curries and highly seasoned dishes. For this reason, too, beer is popular with Spanish and Mexican cookery.

The English ales, porters and stouts are an evolution of beer. They go down twice as well with the English roast beef as the German type of beer.

The hostess who wishes to spring a beer party

must therefore choose her menu with peculiar care. It should reek of simplicity—not too many courses. And she should not serve any other kind of alcoholic beverage on the same occasion. Beers simply won't mix with liquors or wines without unhappy results. Besides, the taste of beer is so all-pervading that any of the finer flavors of wines and spirits are utterly wasted on the beer-drinker.

The fellow who adds whisky to his beer is positively depraved.

Beers, ales, stouts should foam exuberantly.

I once shuddered to see a graceless American crumble cracker crumbs in his beer. Asked how he dared to perpetrate such an atrocity, he blandly explained, "So it will reduce the foam and I can get more beer in the glass!" Horrible. Let it foam, always let it foam. Therein lies much of its virtue.

It is a matter of no importance whatever whether a service of beer appears niggardly. Let 'em come back for a second helping. The American predilection for many and frequent helpings will take care of that—so the more

froth the better, if the nicer standards of gentlemanly drinking are to be maintained.

One has to be pretty much of a hog to get drunk on righteous beer.

We may as well concede that the common popularity of beer has made it a valuable source of tax revenue. Beer is no longer so cheap, even in Bavaria . . . where the best used to cost two pfennigs a stein, and a quality as good as is generally sold in the United States was one pfennig a stein. Those days are no longer with us in any country.

The light sparkling beers have a slightly better social standing than the dark heavy beers, and they can be served with more varied types of food.

The best beers are usually brewed of barley, hops, yeast and water—nothing else. The quality of the water, the composition of the yeast, the manner and artistry of the brewing, do the rest.

Britain and America are accused of defiling beer by the use of substitutes, sugar, carbonic gas, and other methods of forcing it through

the maturing stages. Anyway, that's a Teutonic accusation. "Lagering," by the way, means aging.

There are plenty of beer devotees, however, posing as epicureans, who insist that the best beers known to mankind now come out of Britain and the United States—that any number of breweries have acquired a conscience and cling close to the noblest standards. That, in fact, it was only the conscienceless bootlegger during the Prohibition period who blasted our U. S. A. reputation in this respect.

In a general way, your beer addict is not fussy. If it froths nicely and there's plenty of it, he won't be hypercritical. Hence that form of entertainment known as a "Dutch supper" is the easiest and most informal to accomplish with éclat. The thing has to be deucedly well done, though, if you expect it to add to your social prestige. You must do it far, far better than the barber's Gretchen can do it, down "below the tracks."

If you have a flair for curries, you can, how-

ever, cut a mild dash on an informal occasion. An unimpeachable Indian curry, served with flaked rice, some good cheeses and crackers, have a nice affiliation with beer or good ale. Beer or ale are also an excellent concomitant with Welsh rarebit. And stout still holds its own for nursing mothers.

Stout occasionally edges into society, because a famous London *maître d'hôtel* discovered it went down well with oysters. Oysters are supposed to be peculiarly *sympatica* with champagne, but many epicureans swear by the stout in preference.

Beer and ales, for some mysterious reason, seem to inspire their devotees to song. It is noteworthy that the quality of song is far superior in the Central European countries. This may not denote a thing. Beer addicts with a song complex might do well to look into this. Beer songs show an insular disposition to be mainly about beer, confused with broken hearts, or something a bit lugubrious. Wine songs, on the other hand, are apt to be rollicking. Whisky

songs seem inevitably "Sweet Adeline-ish" with extended nuances.

Perhaps the psychologist could throw a little light on this phase of our subject.

Where there's a swill, there's a sway.

CHAPTER XII

HINTS TO HOSTESSES

AS with etiquette in other fields, it is only safe to take liberties with the rules if one knows better.

If one has succeeded in building a reputation for knowledge of correct procedure (based upon verity), one can amuse oneself by choosing to be original occasionally.

So, sister, if you are not absolutely sure of yourself in these little matters, stick to the rules.

After a while, however, as confidence sets in, you will be tempted to experiment.

For instance, that *hors-d'œuvre,* soup, fish, bird, meat, dessert continuity is really not positively essential to gastronomic happiness.

It is often much more fun to wax informal and provide a surprise meal for the appreciative palate. These should always lean to the side of extreme simplicity—that same form of sim-

plicity that is so expensively dashing in sartorial realms.

Let us just discuss the matter of steak. To include steak in a full-course dinner, only minute portions may be provided. But if it's really a first-class steak, one is tempted to be more generous with it.

Masculinity in particular is apt to fret anent the limitations of a good steak course, and wonders grouchily why it should have to fill up on those other gewgaws.

I recall a certain European potentate who confided that he had been fed chicken twice a day for three months whilst in this country. I was able to tip off a certain distinguished hostess, who promptly decided to give his Royal Highness and the Princess a plain steak dinner.

The royal couple went into ecstasies over that meal, which broke all the rules for entertaining distinguished visitors.

The hostess began by serving a mild cocktail as follows:

One part Holland gin.
One part orange and lemon juice.
One-half part strained sage honey.

With this she provided anchovy canapés, with a dash of Worcester sauce.

The dinner opened with a salad (very American habit this) composed of skinned grapefruit and slices of avocado, arranged on baby lettuce leaves, and served with a rather exceptional French dressing. A good Riesling wine filled the glasses.

Then came the steak—the very best obtainable, tender, luscious, slightly rare, in generous helpings and smothered in mushrooms. With this was provided purée of spinach, wild rice, and shredded tender baby string beans. A rich mellow burgundy topped this off.

For dessert they received a seductive trifle, composed of lady-fingers soaked in old sherry, liberally dotted with blanched almonds and smothered in a light custard. The dessert wine was also old sherry.

Exactly ripe camembert cheese, hardtack, watercress, and a Jamaica rum punch concluded the meal, except for the demi-tasse of black coffee. No liqueurs were provided.

Not only their Royal Highnesses, but about

fifty members of the city's "best people," proclaimed that dinner the best in years, and they talk about it yet.

Naturally, much depended on the perfection of the quality and preparation of the viands served. One must break precedents superlatively.

There is a host in Hollywood who has won gastronomic fame with his corned beef and cabbage dinners, with which he serves first-class beer. But the corned beef secured for these dinners is no ordinary meat, as you may guess. Nor is his cook an ordinary cook. That host doesn't serve another course. No salad, no dessert, no cheeses—only superlative hot rolls and unsalted butter. But no one ever turns down an invitation.

Or there is the British naval captain with a yen for boiled steak-and-kidney suet pudding. His cook makes huge things which are brought steaming to the table in the bowl they are boiled in.

The captain, however, concedes a good salad, mixed and served in the bowl on the table

(French dressing, not mayonnaise), and some fine cheeses to complete the meal.

With this he serves whisky-and-sodas—a light one for a preliminary cocktail, and longer ones to be imbibed with the meal.

Again, I know a hostess who specializes in fish with dazzling results. One of her pet menus begins with sardine canapés served with sherry-and-bitters.

Next comes a crab salad; steamed fresh salmon and stewed cucumbers, potatoes *au gratin* and very green peas; avocado ice-cream and wafers—with sparkling Moselle served throughout. A dash of cognac in the demi-tasse and Russian cigarettes in mellow conclusion.

Now all these menus are easy, simple, and precious few palates but what find them alluring—always providing that quality reigns.

Prince Paul Troubetskoy, a rabid vegetarian, but no Prohibitionist, proved a startling host in this country. The rules did not mean a thing to him. But somehow his dinners sat pretty well with the epicures.

He scorned to serve a cocktail, but the mo-

ment one entered the dining-room one found a quart bottle of very fine red burgundy at each place. The center of the table was piled high with seductive fresh fruits and nuts.

Every imaginable vegetable in season, cooked perfectly but in the simplest manner, appeared on the table in huge bowls, as did a mixed salad. A manservant offered them around, but we mostly served ourselves. Olives, cheeses galore, rolls, crackers, butter, abounded. That's all. The fruit formed the dessert. And every one was wont to agree that nothing else was necessary.

Indian curry specialists can win no end of éclat. Once one has acquired the proper ingredients, it's an easy enough dish to prepare. Cold cooked meats; fish, fresh or canned (preferably tuna)—both form a satisfactory basis for a curry. Your curry addict always keeps onions, apples, rice and such necessary concomitants in the larder.

Curry, being so highly flavored, dominates all other flavors anyway, so it is perfectly good form to serve it alone.

A preliminary cocktail, with a Jamaica rum basis, is sometimes permitted with this—but it is quite safe to serve nothing but beer. Once in a way you will find a tough old gourmet who insists upon whisky-and-soda with his curry, but it is not essential. Never waste good wines on a curry dinner. Their bouquet is submerged.

Our American penchant for the fried chicken dinner is approved even by European gourmets, provided we don't heap too many et ceteras along with it. We are usually accused of overdoing things, you know. Any of the good sparkling wines—and, of course, champagne—goes down well with this national dish of ours. So do the clarets and burgundies. But, Southern colonels to the contrary, whisky is not considered *de riguer*.

The Italian penchant for serving a superfine spaghetti as the main dish, accompanied by some good Italian wine, is another simple dinner that wins high favor—if, oh, *if* you possess the secret of the yum-yummy sauce that must positively supplement that spaghetti. Nothing is so socially blasting as inferior spaghetti.

When the wild duck season is on one can take a few liberties with the menu, if one wants to be original. Just cut out the soup and fish and elevate the duck to a dominant place in the meal.

A good cocktail to precede a wild duck dinner is composed of:

Four parts gin.
One part French vermouth.
A dash of curaçao.
The white of an egg to each six cocktails.

With this serve a seeded green olive grilled in bacon for the canape.

Then bring on your duck—a whole one to each person. The dressing for this is important. It calls for chopped apple, chopped celery, minced green sage, bread-crumbs, a *soupçon* of chopped onion, the whole bound together with the whipped whites of eggs. Then some strips of bacon should be insinuated around the stuffing before it is placed in the duck. Layers of bacon should also be placed across the bird before baking. It should take between thirty and forty minutes for the ducks to roast in a quick oven.

A baked apple, French fried potatoes, brussels sprouts (very green), and an artichoke salad go down well with this one. Either dessert or cheese makes a good finish—but the dessert should be of the plain genre.

With this wild duck dinner serve nothing but sherry—and watch your hospitality stock rise! This is how they serve a duck dinner at one of the smartest duck-hunting clubs.

Another simple meal that finds favor with the epicures is the mixed grill—good thick lamb chops, lambs' kidneys, baby sausages of unimpeachable lineage, and bacon. All that is necessary to precede this meal is a clever fish salad or oyster cocktail, and a good dessert to follow. Here again a gin cocktail is a permissable apéritif. Either claret, burgundy, or the sparkling wines may be served throughout, and a yellow chartreuse makes a particularly welcome liqueur afterwards.

An Irish earl and his countess once picked up five guests, including myself, at a tea-party given by Sir Thomas Lipton. They took us home, merely informing the butler when we

arrived that the extra guests would remain for dinner.

Nothing could have been more simple and unostentatious than that meal.

We chatted casually over a gin-and-bitters (no canapé).

A perfectly plain but exquisite linen tablecloth, the minimum of very good but plain table silver (no array of extra fancy implements), some nice glassware and a few flowers adorned the dining table.

The meal opened with three oysters apiece, served in their shells. A still white wine accompanied these. Next came boiled leg of mutton and caper sauce. But it was Southdown mutton, and the capers were the genuine French variety to form an unimpeachable sauce. Boiled young turnips and mashed potatoes were the sole vegetables. Watercress formed the only salad. A plain baked custard served for dessert. With the mutton came good burgundy. No wine was provided with the dessert, but walnuts and almonds came along with a nice cobwebby

bottle of port. That's all. We sat and gossiped over the port for an hour.

It being somewhat of an adventure for me to dine at the home of an earl, I had expected terrifying formality. Instead I was enchanted—my own lone housekeeper could have encompassed as uncomplicated a meal as that. No soup, no fish, no entrée. No heavily embroidered lace tablecloth. No embarrassment of silver accouterments. Just a thoroughly well-prepared middle-class dinner.

So much depends upon the superior service and quality generally of these less complicated dinners. Done with an air and all the nicer ritual of the wine service, they can compete with the most sophisticated formal course dinners.

But done shabbily—well, sister, either do it well or leave it alone. Or else pull a "pot-luck" story on your guests, if you can be artful enough to make it one of those "on the hop" invitations.

Hollywood, by the way, is the mecca for these "on the hop" invitations—very informal and lots of fun. The most successful of the

starry hosts all go in for specialization because of this. So easy to keep all the ingredients in the house—especially for the drinks—if one has become associated with special dishes and particular kinds of cocktails and wines.

You see, their time is a bit uncertain in the picture game. They may have an evening off or they may work all night, so it is difficult to plan long beforehand. Hence invitations are mostly by telephone on "Come right along over" lines—and we pretty well know what sort of dinner and nectars await us. Much better to do one or two things well than a lot indifferently, in a case like that.

Of course, some of the stars go in for chefs and luscious formality (and drive their cooks crazy with the last-minute parties), but most of them do their formal entertaining at clubs or hotels, while specializing in a few jolly easy menus at home. The home parties are the most enticing.

There will be one house where the host can be depended upon to serve just one type of supe-

rior cocktail, just one brand of wine with the dinner, and only the viands which go best with them. Or again, there will be the house where beer dinners are sure but perfect, and so on. It's a system hard to beat, unless one runs an establishment and goes in for luxurious wine cellars.

One of our older and more charming screen actresses entertains all sorts of visiting nabobs—authors, artists, editors, foreign emissaries, etc. She lives alone in an apartment with just one little maid.

Everything is done exquisitely—but she almost always feeds her guests on omelets and salads, with some suitable wine. Arch-omelets, of course. "So easy to keep plenty of eggs in the house," she explains.

So, you see, one doesn't have to launch out very magnificently to please even one's more celebrated friends. One can make them happy on so little, if it's done well.

The type of host who used to think everything would be all right if he gave his guests plenty of

liquor, however, is a graceless creature. He got by during Prohibition, but he's utterly déclassé now. He belongs with the woman who covers up a spotty gown with doodabs.

"A loaf of bread, a jug of wine, and Thou . . ."

—Omar Khayyam

CHAPTER XIII

ON BEING A GOOD GUEST

A GOOD guest will never strain that social rule which requires a host to exercise unswerving patience and consideration for the visitor within his gates.

He will see to it that his host is charmed by his presence.

The responsibilities of the guest extend beyond his own personal pleasure and behavior. He will not only endeavor to make himself agreeable to every one present, but evince a general satisfaction with everything provided.

There are two kinds of guests who often try the souls of hosts. There is the haughty, critical epicure who manages to convey the impression that nothing is quite satisfactory, even when his disapproval is silent; and there is the ignorant, self-licensed fellow who is just plain hoggish.

Both are obnoxious. And their obnoxiousness

becomes even more evident where liquor is served.

If, when your own palate has cultivated a nice discrimination, your host serves inferior or erroneous liquid refreshment, just being good-temperedly abstemious will meet the situation nicely. It is unnecessary and undesirable to flaunt your epicurean erudition.

You may have to resort to strategy if the stuff is undrinkable. There was the case of the sensitive connoisseur who, wishing to show a nice respect for both his hostess and his own stomach, surreptitiously watered a healthy fern with his cocktail. True, the fern showed a swift and painful decline—but it was sacrificed in a good cause . . . the lesser of three evils.

Otherwise just sip the stuff—it is perfectly good form not to drain the glass. After all, the more cultivated palates amongst us have had plenty of practice in this art of splendid moderation during the recent painful era of hasty home-brews and the stuff which the bootlegger assured the host was "pre-war."

But, at that, your critical epicurean is more

easily tolerated than the fellow who is content to swill down anything that is offered and seems to consider that copious consumption is the be-all and end-all of the party. He is usually both expensive and unpleasant.

There are three excellent reasons for moderation in a guest. If the liquor is above reproach, it should be treated with reverence and respectful obeisance. It probably cost a pretty penny, and every precious drip should be slowly, honorably appreciated. It should not be quaffed in vulgar haste, but lingered over.

If, on the other hand, its quality is indifferent, the guest may conscientiously consider his own innards. In which case, he will likewise imbibe slowly and meagerly, if not reverently.

And again, either way, if a guest imbibes with too much enthusiasm, he not only commits the social crime of becoming a nuisance, but he does so at the expense of his host, the last atrocity.

It is a most unpleasant fallacy to suppose that appreciation can best be shown by hoggishness. No matter how many hosts have seemed to condone this habit of excessive greed, you will inev-

itably be pigeonholed as both expensive and objectionable.

Just because American hosts, unlike foreign hosts, fear to seem niggardly above all things, is no good reason why you should take advantage of their naïveté. If hosts are under a social obligation to protect and consider guests, guests are surely under a multiple obligation to protect and consider their hosts. Only thus can it be more blessed to give than to receive.

To get drunk at your host's expense is the crassest ingratitude. It neither blesses him that gives nor him that takes. In short, as a guest you are a washout.

No one wears out his welcome quite so rapidly as a sponger.

Presuming, however, that you are a regular fellow in good social standing; that you have not yet become an expert connoisseur of good liquors; that swilling, either from your own or any one else's standpoint is abhorrent to you; that you are no ingrate and prefer to stand well in hospitable circles; and that you would wish

to uphold the dignity of your host and hostess—here are a few points to remember:

Arrive on time for a dinner invitation.

Do not accept a second cocktail or apéritif until you are sure of the effect of the first.

Do not accept a third under any circumstances whatever.

Wax cautious about placing your empty glass down on polished furniture or drapes, or upon the covers of books.

Avoid smoking if you anticipate that the dinner will be well considered.

If a still wine is served with the first courses, drink it at your leisure. If a sparkling wine, drink it before it ceases to fizz.

When a claret or burgundy is served with the later courses, sip it slowly, if possible with relish.

Do not accept more than two services of any one wine through a course dinner. When several wines are served, one helping is usually ample.

Dally over such wines as ports, old sherries and the finer muscatel. These should always be sipped slowly. When they are of an exceptional

vintage, voice your appreciation to your hosts.

Never accept a second service of liqueur when wines have been served throughout the dinner.

Never accept another service of anything whatever if you are in the slightest doubt about its effect upon you.

If a final whisky highball is offered late in the evening, remember that one is sufficient, and that this is also a hint that the party has come to an end. Within a polite interval after that last highball, take your leave.

It is bad form to smoke through dinner if good wines are served. Smoke spoils the palate for a proper appreciation of the nectars and viands provided.

Never ask for any kind of liquor that is not in evidence, and thus risk embarrassing your hosts.

Never call for a further supply of drinks, for the same reason.

If any of your fellow-guests give evidence of being inexperienced in the matter of liquor, tactfully aid them in avoiding any regrettable excesses.

If a fellow guest shows signs of becoming an alcoholic nuisance, aid your hosts by helping to take care of him, and hasten his retirement before he can annoy other guests.

Unless you are peculiarly intimate with your hosts, do not take any liquor to a party with you. This habit, considered generous and excusable during the Prohibition era, is an impertinence in normal times.

Do not try to persuade any one to drink if he shows reluctance. This is a ruling for both host and guest.

Remember that the success of the Repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment can be materially aided by your own scrupulous personal conduct.

"Welcome the coming, speed the parting guest."

—ODYSSEY

CHAPTER XIV

CUSTOMS TO FROWN UPON

ONE of the most deplorable customs that won favor during Prohibition, especially in flamboyant Hollywood, was the home bar.

Hosts, anxious to seem lavish with forbidden nectar, thought it smart to transform one room of their home into an imitation saloon, with bartender all complete. This became a well-worn joke as the "dry" years wended.

Even at important functions held at large clubs or hotels, it became the custom to establish a "Red Cross station" in a private room, usually a bedroom, where, because the occasion was officially "dry," guests would swill down as much liquor as they dared, hastily, indiscriminately. The result was pretty awful.

The country is full of young people who, alas, learned their drinking in this deplorable era. It seemed such a pity to leave any liquor behind,

so it was considered riotously amusing to drain all the bottles.

Hosts would jovially exhort:

"Say, we can't waste any of this good stuff. Come on, you pikers, finish it up."

The younger guests in particular always accepted such exhortation as a command. Many of the older ones, who should have remembered less graceless days, were apt to prove very amenable. Even, I mean, when it was by no means "good stuff."

The home bars were, of course, even worse. The habit of hasty swills was the same, except that it lasted all the evening in a private home, where it had to be encompassed prior to the event in the case of a public function.

The home bar idea is far worse than any saloon. One doesn't have to wait to be invited to drink, and one doesn't have to consider paying for one's own drinks, or standing a round to the crowd when one's turn comes. It takes a well-bred person to refrain from being lavish at the expense of some one else.

Then, too, because so many young people

knew naught but this Prohibition era, they were tempted to sample any new brands of liquor which presented themselves. The mixtures they imbibed were therefore quite appalling. Education on this so prevalent subject had been entirely omitted from their curriculum.

Naturally, the sort of hosts who established a home bar were not the type to accept any responsibility, even when they knew better. They were much more concerned in winning a reputation for lavish generosity.

Drinking manners in the United States fell about as low as it is possible for them to fall under these conditions. Even in the small town, the Babbitt "leaders of society" would fix up their kitchens and pantries, or even their bathrooms, as bars when they gave a party, and felt sumptuously sophisticated. Very nasty.

With Repeal, this habit should be severely frowned upon. There is no longer the slightest possible excuse for it. If you have one of those home bars, wall it up as you would an ancient crypt, for future historians to discover—and shudder over. Or, better still, turn it into a

"den" for the man of the house, or a playroom for the children, consigning all evidence of the bar to the junkman. Otherwise there will surely come a day when you will recoil with horror from your own past social crime.

Naturally, too, the custom of carrying a flask now becomes inexcusable. Even in the United States, in the pre-Prohibition days, there were very few occasions when the pocket-flask was permissible. The person who carried a flask without good and sufficient reason, prior to the enactment of the Eighteenth Amendment, was utterly déclassé.

Unfortunately, flask-toting became so usual in a *soi-disant* dry country that many of the younger generation envied and imitated the vulgar habit. Those poor kids have so much to unlearn.

These things are simply not being done in the best circles nowadays. And, D.V., they will be considered pretty messy in all circles, if we show any aptitude for education at all.

We can all recall the vulgar days in which it was customary to smack one's lips and evince

fulsome ecstasy when some liquor was brought forth. Devilishly thrilling, what? Any old kind of liquor could evoke shouts of exuberant enthusiasm.

That custom will now stamp the perpetrator as an ignorant, common creature, obviously "under-privileged." Dear heaven, what manner of company has the fellow been keeping?

Where once we talked copiously about liquor and let the subject hog the conversation on so many occasions, we can now take it as a matter of course, and regulate it to its own proper sphere in life.

The trouble with Prohibition was that it made liquor so frightfully interesting, elevated it to dreadful importance. We talked about it much as starved children talk about cheap candy. It made us so paltry.

Quite decent hosts, inviting guests in otherwise good standing, were apt to wax mysteriously enticing by throwing out broad hints that liquor would be served at the party. Whereupon the invited one would exclaim archly, throw a rapture, and accept with excessive cordiality. That

sort of thing, let us hope, is now relegated to the vulgar past. It automatically becomes rotten bad form, both ways.

On the other hand, out of respect for our non-drinking friends, it may not come amiss to reassure them by indicating that a "dry" party is contemplated, when an invitation is issued.

It is just as well for "wet" devotees to give a dry party occasionally. They will miss associating with quite a number of really nice people if they don't.

That is another deplorable custom that can well be dropped nowadays. During Prohibition it was distressingly usual for even the nicer "wets" either to cut their "dry" friends off their social lists, or affront them by serving liquor in their presence. One can afford to have better manners in these little matters now.

Where extreme "drys" were wont to consider all alcohol imbibers as disciples of the Devil, it is equally illogical for "wets" to regard all those people as bigoted kill-joys who prefer total abstinence.

As between a conscientious total abstainer and

an immoderate swiller, the former is infinitely more desirable. This should correct an erroneous misapprehension in numerous damp circles. The most despicable chap is the mugwump—and look what happened to him in the last election!

Where it was formerly the vogue to serve a great deal of bad liquor rather than none at all, it is now required that one serve a moderate quantity of very good liquor or none.

During Prohibition there was a marked disposition on the part of certain types of men to brag of having been "tight" on such and such an occasion. They seemed to think it marked them for persons of privileged opportunity.

From now on, both the act itself and the conversation thereto will call for mere opprobrium. The fellow will merely be bragging that he took disgusting advantage of an opportunity that is open to all.

"A gentleman will not and others must not."

CHAPTER XV

STRANGE NECTARS

AN important point in the art of correct drinking is to sample strange nectars with caution.

Imagine the embarrassment of a polite drinker, well versed in the use of all the more widely known liquors, when he first meets, say, okolehau, the famous Hawaiian drink, and imbibes it as he would beer!

The traveler finds himself confronted with strange nectars in many ports. Perhaps there is no friend to guide him as to each one's class distinction. It might come within the category of wine, spirit, beer or grape-juice, for all he knows. Some most distressing debacles have resulted from this sort of inexperience.

For instance, the saki of Japan has the appearance of an innocent white wine. It is served in small china bowls. The stranger within their

gates is tempted to partake of it with the same unconcern with which he would quaff Sauterne or Riesling. This is a grave error. There are sakis and sakis, and some of them are alarmingly potent. It's almost the difference between a weak highball and straight raw whisky. So, for the sake of your national honor, approach your introduction to Japan's nectars with extreme caution.

The okolehau of Hawaii is insidious stuff, bent on mischief. It can do appalling things to an unversed stomach. Just as well to treat it with the same abstemiousness one accords to liqueur until one has become more familiar with its little ways.

The same may be said of the pontacq of South Africa. This has all the appearance of an innocent red claret—which it certainly does not live up to on a too enthusiastic first acquaintance.

This is likewise true of the Mexican tequila.

In Persia they will serve you arogh, which is remotely related to gin but thrice as strong.

The vodka of Russia, as imbibed by hardened Russians, is no drink for an amateur. It's a sort

of gangster relative of brandy, which that honorable family would wish to repudiate.

A Hollywood host received a present of a case of bottled liquid from an Oriental friend in China. The accompanying letter indicated that it was a Manchurian wine of exceptional charm which would transform the most modest meal into a Lucullean banquet.

A party was obviously in order. The host served the wine with the later courses in claret glasses. The result was almost instantaneously disrupting. Staid dowagers of unimpeachable dignity, down to the least of the guests, behaved with deplorable informality. The butler took command of the situation as well as he was able, finally giving a medical friend of the host an urgent confidential call.

When the debacle subsided under the expert administrations of the doctor, the case was inspected. And there, in a small unnoticed envelope, the donor had carefully explained that this nectar was concentrated Kaoliang spirit and that an amount measuring about one teaspoonful

should be taken at the close of the dinner; that, in fact, the case contained enough of the stuff to last the host the rest of his life! Phew!

There is lure and crass treachery in the "swizzle" of the West Indies. It reeks of hospitality and imminent disaster. Necromancy stalks, albeit a swizzle is regarded as the cornerstone of elixir.

The ritual begins harmlessly enough, when a generous portion of Holland gin is decanted into a tall thin glass to which a dash of Angostura bitters is added. Sugar, water, and possibly some other more mysterious ingredients complete the liquid prescription.

So far, so good. But a beneficent Nature has provided another important adjunct, known to the islands as Five Fingered Jack. This fellow is a swizzle-stick whose habit of growth is a smooth straight trunk from which, at appropriate intervals, protrude five limbs, Jack's five fingers. These are trimmed back to about half an inch in length and the stem cut to ten inches. The bark is removed and the stick is ready for business.

The function of the swizzle-stick becomes a matter of high ritual. The host places it reverently within the glass and proceeds to roll it back and forth between the palms of the hands with great solemnity. The ingredients are thus compounded until a delectable golden foam appears as a result of this strange alchemy. Something subtle is distilled from the imprisoned essence within the stick, which adds a haunting flavor.

The result is what is handed to you after you have replied in the affirmative to an invitation to "Have a swizzle?" Ardent proponents recommend that you "Have a swizzle and die." Theoretically a gin fizz, it is actually nothing of the kind. The swizzle-stick has the rod of Moses, the baton of a conductor, the wand of a magician, beaten to a frazzle, as all agree who have partaken of its potency.

The stranger will do well to sample a swizzle with peculiar deliberation. In hasty and copious consumption lies chaos.

In many of the remote places of the world they have concocted their own beverages under

enticing native names—to the utter confusion of the unsuspecting wayfarer.

Under the seemingly harmless title of "punch" ghastly mixtures are offered the reckless traveler —usually by white residents in the Tropics whose own stomachs have become inured to purgatory. They will mix rum, whisky, brandy with something innocent like limes or cold tea, or pineapple juice—and appear sympathetically shocked when the stranger within their gates exudes alarming reactions.

These are emphatically occasions on which to remember that one man's refreshment is another man's confusion.

Nothing has disconcerted Americans more than a too enthusiastic acceptance of the "free beer" offered the traveler in Cuba. Beer! It sounds so mild. But they don't seem to know a thing about the 3.2 variety of the good old U. S. A. in that embarrassingly hospitable island. Which does not prevent the visiting American, off the ship perhaps for a few hours on the way to Panama, from treating it for all the world as though it were near-beer.

The result is that officers on ships must remain on duty, frequently with stretchers, in order to get passengers back on board. It is usual for most of these naïve guests of Cuba to remain *hors de combat* until they reach Panama—to the cynical amusement of the ship's crew. It is difficult for even the most haughty passenger to regain his dignity after an occurrence like that.

Panama goes in chiefly for Spanish types of wines and American hard liquors—but it, too, can spring some disturbing concoctions on one in the guise of cocktails or punches.

The trouble is that even the most simple of ingredients, when mixed with other equally simple ingredients, can prove hideously deceitful to the unwary.

Any concoction that combines two or more kinds of spirits, such as rum, gin, brandy, whisky, is sheer dynamite and horrifies the epicure.

Oh, my young friends, do be careful. The very honor of your country may depend upon it. The people in these remote places are so apt to judge all Americans by the behavior of one

American. And you have no idea what a peculiarly distasteful person an American can be on, say, Hawaiian okolehau, incautiously imbibed.

Discretion is the better part of patriotism.

CHAPTER XVI

CANAPÉS AND HORS-D'ŒUVRES

THE vogue of the canapé has grown apace. Where once it was regarded as an enhancement to the more formal dinners, it is now an accepted prelude to any sort of dining out.

By the way, "canapé" means couch or divan. "Hors-d'œuvre" means a digression, something outside the program.

They take the form of tasty titbits designed to eat with the cocktail in the living-room, before the guests are seated at the table. They should be prepared in dainty morsels to be taken in one bite, or at most, two.

Here are some approved canapés as served by some of our most engaging hosts:

(1) *Lamb kidneys and bacon.* The kidneys should be skinned, washed, cut into six or eight pieces, rolled in flour and wrapped with a slither of bacon, skewered with a toothpick. Laid in rows in a shallow pan, they are baked in an oven for about twenty

minutes. They should be handed round on a warm dish, and eaten from the toothpick held in the fingers.

(2) *Green olives and bacon.* Stuffed olives skewered with slithers of bacon and cooked in the oven until the bacon is frizzled.

(3) *Foies gras.* Chop a few capers, mix with the *foies gras,* spread on small sippets of thin toast. Good liverwurst may be treated the same way.

(4) *Anchovies.* Either the fillets or the paste, and spread either on the sippets of toast or canapé crackers.

(5) *Cottage cheese.* Grind some almond nuts, chop a wee piece of onion, blend with the cheese, and spread on the toast. This is also good served in a bowl, with a pile of potato chips, allowing the guest to scoop up his own canapé.

(6) *Bloater paste.* Spread on toast sippets or crackers.

(7) *Powdered yolk of hard-boiled egg.* With a touch of garlic, served on rye bread.

(8) *Ripe camembert cheese.* Spread on hard-tack.

(9) *Cheese straws and peanut butter.* Heated in oven.

(10) *Chopped cucumber and paprika.* On crisp toast.

(11) *Chopped Scandinavian sardines and Worcester sauce.* On canapé pastry.
(12) *Chopped crab meat and anchovy butter.* On toasterettes.

The enterprising hostess will soon think up others for herself. So many kinds of fishes, cheeses, butters, sauces, lend themselves to the canapé idea. Mushrooms go exceptionally well with a sherry apéritif. Then there is our old friend caviare, which blends so very well with gin cocktails. Chopped capers, chopped ripe olives, chopped celery, chutneys galore, lend themselves nicely to the canapé scheme.

These are all very easy to prepare. A very modest dinner can gain tone and tastiness by a liberal supply of piquant canapés served beforehand with the cocktails. On the other hand, if you are particularly proud of your dinner, go slow on the canapés—as they are apt to take the edge off the appetite if indulged in too liberally.

Some women, like the canapé, should be reserved for a teasing titivation. They are inadequate for profound moments.

CHAPTER XVII

THE BUFFET SUPPER

THAT elastic movable feast, the buffet supper, once largely associated with small-town socials, received the visé of high society after the war.

It is all part of our leaning toward informality. I mean, even quite nice people, who select their guests with discretion, will frequently entertain with a buffet supper nowadays, where formerly this sort of function was reserved for the "crush" to pay off an accumulation of small social obligations.

The buffet can partake of the gay informality of the cocktail party, combined with the solid sustenance of dinner. Or, under inexperienced host-ship, prove more banal and exhausting than a British high-tea.

It may be scheduled for any time between 6.30 P.M. and midnight. Dress may be formal

or informal. The fare provided may be modestly suburban, dashingly Bohemian, or luxuriously epicurean. It can also be a jumble of all three, which is not so good.

Unless there is an exceptional reason to the contrary, the party will fare better if the guests are fed early in the proceedings. Many a party has proved a frost because the guests were kept hungry too long.

Done well, the buffet supper simplifies things for all concerned. The cook and the help prefer it to a formal dinner any old day.

The kind that is to precede a theater party or some other function elsewhere, should start early to avoid undue haste. Therefore a bid to cocktails at 6.30 P.M., with the food served promptly at 7 P.M. meets the situation very nicely. This usually entails formal dress.

If, however, it is an after-the-show affair, cocktails at 11.30 and supper at midnight are in order. The latter is planned on the assumption that the guests have dined earlier in the evening, hence the repast is much lighter. The earlier

supper partakes of the nature of dinner and should be more substantial.

Even when the guests are to remain at the house throughout the evening, it is well not to serve cocktails later than 7 P.M., the supper at 7.30 or soon after. People used to dining regularly get so restive at having passed up their usual dinner hour. They are also likely to imbibe the cocktails on an empty stomach, which opens up all sorts of calamitous possibilities.

Of course one may give buffet suppers at any time between these hours, but they never go quite so well, outside of the Bohemian set, which is apt to gain its sustenance so irregularly anyway.

One charm of the buffet supper is that astute guests can choose their own table company—except, of course, that a diplomatic host will see to it that those lacking the assertion that goes with social aplomb do not lose out in the shuffle.

Successful entertaining depends so largely upon inviting the right crowd together—people on the same mental level, moving in a similar social realm. Then if the solid and liquid fare are

adequate the party pretty well takes care of itself.

When, however, the party is designed to pay off an assortment of social obligations, the host will do well to ponder. Often safer to give two small parties, rather than one large one. In this way, it is possible to segregate the bores to one occasion, tactfully confiding in each, of course, that one is depending upon his or her exceptional social charms to make the affair a success.

The bores' party will call for more elaborate fare, especially in the matter of nectars, since these must shoulder so much of the social burden. (Much less expensive to entertain bright people!) One may even need some compelling entertainment to keep the bores from yawning in each other's faces. None so swift to recognize one bore as another bore. They are always hypersensitive. That is why it is a good idea to provide as many distractions as possible. That is the only kind of party, for instance, at which it is safe to have the radio drown out conversation.

One can almost gauge the quality of the party when one hears the radio going full blast when

one arrives at the house—or, in more expensive circles, a noisy orchestra "pepping up" the occasion.

When one feels one must positively mix the breeds, one must be prepared to jeopardize one's social standing. Our brighter friends will surely feel a *soupçon* reproachful, and even the most lavish service of viands and nectars may not wholly save us.

Official consular parties are an illustration of this. Consuls have to invite such a varied assortment of people. Official affairs of any kind, formal dinners or informal buffet suppers, call for exceptional host-ship on this account.

At these wholesale events it is quite *comme il faut* to serve a good punch throughout the supper, even omitting the cocktails—useful economic item.

But it is never, never good form to have a private cache for favored guests, as can happen, for instance, at motion picture studio parties. This comes under the heading of undemocratic discrimination, and should be properly frowned upon. (Especially if one is not included in the

favored!) This sort of thing became outrageously usual under Prohibition, when even the punch for the mass of guests was inferior, and a select few would respond to the vulgar beckon of a thumb indicating stronger but more secretive refreshment elsewhere.

However, given a selected *sympatica* crowd, a well-chosen menu, and the correct liquid refreshment, a buffet supper can cover its hosts with éclat.

There must be good generalship to avoid confusion. Where possible, the small tables should be in place before the guests arrive, carefully considered as to light, and laid with the necessary napery, cutlery, glassware and condiments. When they must be placed and removed in the presence of the guests, it is just as well to leave this in the hands of total abstainers.

It is better when cocktails can be served in a separate room, or even on a garden porch on a summer night. These should be selected with a nice regard for the viands and wines to follow. Sherry-and-bitters may easily prove preferable. But, in any case, stick to one form of apéritif

and use only the most superior ingredients. These, together with the canapés, should be handed while the guests remain standing, well in advance of the supper. Of course, if the guests insist upon sitting down, it is not a social offense —but they are likely to mess up your small tables, if you have not arranged for that separate room.

When the food is being served at a reasonably early hour, two cocktails are permissible. Later on, the more cautious guest will pause at one, if it is well past his usual dinner-time.

The food should be prepared with an eye to the fact that it will all go on one plate and that guests will serve themselves. Thus meats will be ready carved, and a sloppy gravy that will invade the salad should be avoided. It should be arranged on the dining-room table and the sideboards in nice rotation.

Experienced guests know how to pick where and with whom they will sit at the small tables— even when it entails dodging a hawk-like hostess with executive ideas about seating her spinster sister with the most eligible male, or her real-

estate spouse with the wealthy widow contemplating purchasing a new domain. A smart executive hostess, on the other hand, intent upon wielding her sway in this regard, has a better chance of encompassing her purpose less obviously at a buffet supper than at a formal dinner.

Just one type of appropriate wine should be served with a buffet supper, and the proper glasses provided therefor. It should be served after the guests are seated at the tables. It may be any of the clarets, burgundies, white wines, sparkling wines, or champagnes. It can even be beer if it is that sort of a party (in which case the preliminary cocktail will be omitted).

The correct allowance for each person is about a pint of the clarets, burgundies and white dinner wines; about three services of the sparkling wines, or two glasses of champagne.

Because of the informality of the buffet supper, the guest must accept a nice responsibility in the matter of the wines. It is positively not necessary to accept all that is offered. Good form, for instance, demands that when one is

offered a third service of champagne, the polite guest will murmur, "No, thank you." This is a sort of gentleman's agreement the nicer hosts should be able to count upon, if invitations have been extended with discretion.

These, I repeat, are the righteous limits. If you are tempted to exceed them, let your conscience be your guide.

Where champagne is served, it is best to use it for the cocktails also, in which case, the quota would be four glasses per person all told. The preferred goodnight drink at the close of the evening would also be champagne, in this case—just one last glass, bringing the grand total to five glasses for the evening.

To top off the meal, nothing sets better than cognac in the coffee. Decanters should be placed on each table for guests to help themselves. This need not be so risky a proceeding as it sounds, even amongst that younger generation so ill-informed in matters of nicer abstention. The demi-tasse, you see, should be slightly more than two-thirds filled. The righteous amount of cognac to add is one teaspoonful, if it is of a

valued brand. Still, perhaps we should not be too insistent about the decanters being on the table, until we have noticeably improved the manners acquired during the Prohibition era.

When wines other than champagne have been served with the supper, it is permissible to provide whisky highballs for the goodnight drink just before the party breaks up. Just one highball—and then say good night and go home.

When it is a midnight buffet the procedure is different. The meal will be lighter. One may serve whisky-and-soda throughout this supper, if desired. The British brandy-and-soda is also *de rigueur*. But on no account must cocktails be served at any time after dinner. This is a social atrocity. But whether it is spirit or wines, only one type of liquor may be served at the midnight buffet supper—the idea being to avoid all possible conflict with anything the guest may have imbibed earlier in the evening. If it was a beer supper, avoid any service of whisky, at all costs. Whisky and beer are an insufferable combination.

A good punch may form the liquid refreshment for a midnight supper, composed of wines

rather than spirits. Or, in winter, there is a good deal to be said for hot port wine negus, or mulled ale. The latter sets well when beer has been served at an early supper.

Good form requires us to take our leave after a midnight supper at 2 A.M.—unless earnestly requested to prolong our stay by the host. Even then, make dead sure he means it.

The fact that all these rules have been gracelessly ignored during the past decade does not impair their virtue. As our drinking manners improve, offenders will find their invitations growing ever more scant.

Let this be our fondest quest:
The gracious host, the perfect guest.

CHAPTER XVIII

PUNCHES AND CUPS

CUPS and punches form the simplest method of serving drinks at garden parties, on country club porches and at supper dances.

The punches are more intricate and expensive than the cups. Both are served in huge bowls and ladled out into the glasses.

A *Champagne Punch* is, of course, very stylish. It calls for:

One luscious pineapple, pared and sliced into dice.
The juice of six large oranges.
The juice of three lemons.
A small box of strawberries.
One quart of brandy.
One quart of curacoa.
One quart of tokay.
Six bottles of Apollinaris water.
Mix and let stand for several hours.
Then add a large chunk of ice and
Six quarts of champagne.

It is just as well for the thrifty host not to waste an exceptional vintage of champagne on a punch. Reserve that for a solo drink.

* * *

Here are the ingredients for the *Cup:*

The juice of one lemon.
A wineglassful of brandy.
A wineglassful of maraschino.
Two sliced oranges.

Just before serving, add the ice and one quart of either champagne, burgundy, sparkling Moselle, claret, Sauterne, sparkling cider, or what have you?

Both punches and cups should be served in the *small* handled glass cups, not tumblers.

* * *

There's a *Milk Punch* which is not as innocent as it sounds:

Pour two and a half pints of boiling water over two and a quarter pounds of sugar. Cover this until nearly cold. Add the juice of twelve lemons, cover again, and leave until next morn-

ing. Then add one quart of whisky and one of pale Jamaica rum, and stir gently. Bring a quart of milk to boiling-point and add without stirring. Cover for two more hours. Strain until it is as clear as water—and serve.

Milk? Yeah. Better give the children a little raspberry wine.

* * *

There's a *Lemon Cup* that is equally deceptive:

Two quarts of claret.
Three pints of soda water.
Two glasses of sherry.
Half a glass of brandy.
Sugar to taste.
Two sliced lemons.
Ice.

Let this one stand until the ice has melted, then serve.

* * *

A winter night supper drink known as a *Negus:*

One quart of port wine, warmed.
One quart of boiling water.
One wineglassful of brandy.
Nutmeg to taste.

* * *

Try this *Mulled Ale* on a cold stormy night:

One quart of brown ale.
One glass of brandy.
One tablespoonful of sugar.
A pinch each of clove, nutmeg and ginger.
Place the ale, sugar and spices in a stewpan and bring to near-boiling point. Then add the brandy.

Served with a sizzling hot Welsh rarebit, this is food and nectar for the gods—always providing they are not suffering from peptic ulcers or any such gastronomic handicap.

* * *

We should be able to say "Good-night" on the best of terms after that.

"I could not love thee, dear, so much, loved I not honor more."

—LOVELACE